

Asia Sunday 2009



Country in Focus: Sri Lanka
Theme: Tear Drop
24 May 2009

Christian Conference of Asia

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About the Cover Design:

Sri Lanka is like a tear drop of Asia in the Indian Ocean. Indeed Sri Lanka is rocked by political harassments that cause so much suffering. But suffering does not have the final say, just as the cross of Calvary does not have the final say.

Invitation to Celebrate

Asia Sunday 2009

Since 1974, Asia Sunday has been celebrated in Asia and among ecumenical organizations around the world on the Sunday before Pentecost. The day commemorates the founding of the East Asian Christian Conference (EACC), now the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA). This year, Asia Sunday falls on 24 May 2009. If this date is not available in your church's calendar, please choose another appropriate date to celebrate Asia Sunday.

The liturgical material is jointly produced by the Christian Conference of Asia and the National Christian Council in Sri Lanka. You are welcome to use the suggested liturgy or parts of it, the sermon ideas, Bible reflections and prayers, according to your particular situation. You are also welcome to translate this liturgy to your own languages and dialects.

This year the theme for Asia Sunday is "Tear Drop". It symbolizes the country of Sri Lanka, which is the focus of this year's celebration. As we all know, our Christian sisters and brothers in this country live and witness their faith in a "state of war" as the political conflict continues. Let us remember the people of Sri Lanka in our prayers. Let us also pray for the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka and its member churches in their ecumenical journey for just peace.

CCA encourages member churches and national councils to make a special offering for the peace program of the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka as it strives for peaceful solution to the conflicts in their beloved country. Your special financial contribution can be sent through the Christian Conference of Asia,

which will then transfer it to the NCC-Sri Lanka. For more information on this, please contact the CCA General Secretary at prawate@cca.org.hk.

In order to unite with one another, we must love one another.
In order to love one another, we must know one another.
In order to know one another, we must go and meet one another.
(A Testament of Cardinal Mercier)

In Sri Lanka war still continues. The people, both Sinhalese and Tamils, are living in fear. The conflict between the government troops and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) has displaced thousands of ordinary people in the Northeast. Cases of abduction and disappearances are increasing. Some are abducted for ransom while others are abducted to silence the voice of dissent.

The Church, as a living body of the Christ, has been called to be an instrument of peace and reconciliation, to be a church in solidarity with the suffering and struggling people.

I pray that this Asia Sunday 2009 may give us strength, courage and commitment to bring life to a suffering land and its suffering people.

Prawate Khid-arn
General Secretary
Christian Conference of Asia

Introduction to the Theme of Asia Sunday 2009

Sri Lanka, situated in the Indian Ocean, is like a small drop just below India. It was called by various names in the past and one such name was The Pearl of the Indian Ocean. It had a rich diversity of cultures and everything was pleasant. The country came under three colonial powers from 1505 to 1948: Portuguese, Dutch and British.

Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are the religions of the people. The Christian population in the country is around 7%. Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers live in the country. The co-existence that prevailed in the country with tolerance, ahimsa (non-violence) is disappearing rapidly due to socio-economic-political-cultural and religious reasons. In the recent past, much mistrust has developed among the people. Such mistrust is due to historical grievances and also prejudices. The colonial legacy and the insensitive methods used by certain Christians and groups to evangelise people of different faiths, religions, ideologies had created animosity towards Christians in certain parts of the country.

The country lost many lives due to violence; the ethnic violence in the country goes back to almost 3 decades and has taken away well over 70,000 lives. The Tsunami that struck the island on 26 December 2004 took away another 40,000 lives. The ongoing war continues to take away many lives. The Christians are the only religious community where there are both Sinhalese and Tamils. The Church leadership has appealed to both parties to the conflict to end the war and to go for a negotiated settlement.

Sometimes, this has led some people in the country to consider the Church as pro-Tamil and unpatriotic. The people in general are wearied of the war.

Poor, war widows, orphans, lame, Internally Displaced Persons are spread all over the country. We hear many stories of tears from different parts of the country. Thus, the small island in the Indian Ocean is no more The Pearl of the Indian Ocean, but it is like the Tear Drop of the Indian Ocean.

This liturgy is prepared in this particular context. Tears depict pain and agony as well as hope to transform the situation. May this liturgy draw us closer to God and may God wipe the tears of our eyes. Our wish is that this may be a small inspiration to depend on God and work with God to bring the new heaven and the new earth where there will be no more tears. May this liturgy draw us closer to one another as well in Asia!

May you and us be blessed through this liturgy!

Jayasiri T. Peiris
General Secretary
National Christian Council
Sri Lanka

National Christian Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL)

Founded in 1945 (forerunners: the Christian Council of India, Burma & Ceylon formed in 1923, the Christian Council in Ceylon, 1922, the Ceylon Representative Council of Missions, 1920, and the All Ceylon Conference of 1912).

Basis: To affirm and confess our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, and to seek together to fulfill the common calling, to the glory of the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Vision: To cooperate with God in the establishment of the reign of God here on earth through ecumenical encounter and witness.

Member churches:

- Church of Ceylon - Diocese of Colombo
- Church of Ceylon - Diocese of Kurunegala
- Church of South India - Jaffna Diocese
- Christian Reformed Church (formerly Dutch Reformed Church)
- Methodist Church
- Presbytery of Lanka
- Salvation Army
- Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya

Ecumenical Organizations:

- Ceylon Bible Society
- Christian Literature Society
- Student Christian Association
- Young Men's Christian Association
- Young Women's Christian Association

A United Christian Service for Asia Sunday

Theme: Tear Drop

Adoration

Leader: Homage to the One God, the Ultimate Reality That You Are:
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: **Homage to the One God, the Ultimate Reality That You Are:**
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All kneel and sing or say this homage:

Namo namo mavumkarun

(We worship you Creator)

Namo namo midumkarun

(We worship you Liberator)

Namo namo sudath murun

(We worship you Sanctifier)

Namo namo thiyek murun

(We worship you O Trinity)

Vandagena bathi pem pamen

(In love and in faith we worship devoutly)

Devinduta pasasum theemen

(And offer our praises to God)

Devi saranaya than pathmen

(Now taking refuge in him completely)

Karamuva arayum saamen
(In peace we will pray to our God)

Saulova mavthum aadi devinde
(The God of old who made the universe)
Mok suva dun puth Jesu saminde
(The Son Jesus who gave us freedoms bliss)

Saasana rakna sudha surinde
(The Holy Spirit who protects the Church)
Than yahapath veva apa madthe
(May this our God descend into our midst)

[For Lyrics and notes, see “We Worship You, Creator God,” in *Sound the Bamboo*, p. 9]

We Worship You, Creator God

(Sinhala: Namo namo mavunkarun)



<i>1. Na - mo na - mo ma - vun - ka - run,</i>	<i>Na - mo na - mo mi - dum - ka - run,</i>
1. We wor-ship you, Cre - a - tor God,	we wor - ship you, Re - deem - er God,
2. We love you LORD, in - spire our prayer,	we give our all to praise your Name;
3. O Source of Be-ing; O Word of Light,	in - car - nate Love, the Way to bliss;



<i>Na - mo na - mo su - da - th mu - run,</i>	<i>Na - mo na - mo thi - yek mu - run.</i>
we wor-ship you, Sanc-ti - fi - er God,	we wor - ship you, O Trin - i - ty.
Sol-ace and peace we find here with you;	your grace and joy our hearts ac-claim.
O Spir-it, Breath of peace through the church: Come,	Tri - une God, in - to our midst.

* Leader sings each phrase, and the congregation repeats the same.

stz. 1 should be sung in the original.

*2. Vandagena bathi pem pamen,
Devinduta pasasum dheemen,
Devi saranaya dhan pathmen,
Karamuva arayum samen,*

*3. Saulova mavuthum adhidevinde,
Mok suva dhun puth Jesu Saminde,
Sasana rakna sudhasurinde,
Dhan yahapath weva apa madhe,*

Words: from Workers' Mass, Sri Lanka

Music: *NAMO NAMO*; from Workers' Mass, Sri Lanka

Lighting the Lamp

Ministers will light lamps while the following is said slowly with silent pauses:

Reader: The world is full of darkness and confusion.

Asia is full of violence and anger.

Our country is full of pain and suffering.

Jesus wept.

With a tear drop, the Risen Christ is the light and hope
of the world.

Local drums or maracas will be played as a sign of celebration.


Opening Hymn:

Jesus, Savior Lord, Lo to You I Fly (*Thamilz: Yesu raajenin thiruvediku*); Sound the Bamboo p.59

Jesus, Savior Lord, Lo to You I Fly


(*Thamilz: Yesu raajenin thiruvediku*)

Refrain




Ye - su raa - je - nin thi - ru - ve - di - ku, sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam,
Je - sus, Sav - ior Lord, lo to you I fly; Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam.


Fine



aath - me naa - dhe - rin ma - le - re - di - ku, sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam.
You the Rock, my Re - fuge that's higher than I: Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam.



1.Paar pot - trum thuuye thuuyedhee - ve - nee - mei raa - jaa - vee yeng - gell - naa - dhe - nee
2.I - llai paa - ru - dhel the - rum veen - dhe nee - yinnel thunbem niikum a - rull naa - dhe - ree
1.In the midst of foes I cry to you, from the ends of earth wherever I may be,
2.In your tent give me a dwell - ing place, and be - neath your wings may I find shel - tering grace,
3.O that I my vow to you may pay, and that by your faithfulness to me each day;



Ba - yem nii - kum thunnei yaavum aa - ni - ree, sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam.
ye - zlei yen - nei aatri thettri kaa pi - ree, sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam sa - re - nnam.
my strength in helplessness, O an - swer me: Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam.
O lift on me the sunshine of your face: Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam.
may live, and on your love my bur - dens lay: Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam, Sa - re - nnam.

* Sarennam means "Refuge"; also "I take refuge."

4. Yesterday, today for ever the same,
Lo, the heritage of all who hear his name.
To ransom them from sin the Savior came:
Sarennam, Sarennam, Sarennam.

3. Beleviinem Yaavum Pokkum, vallore
Beleniindhu Valekkarem pidippiiree
Aavi Aathmaa Saniireththaip Padaikkireen.
Sarennam, sarennam, sarennam.

4. Undhen Siththem Seiye Arull Thaarumee
Yendhen Siththem Yaavum Endrum olzippiiree
Sondhe maage Eetru Yennai Aatkollum.
Sarennam, Sarennam, Sarennam.

Words: Psalm 61; para. D.T.Niles

Music: SARENAM; Popular melody, Pakistan / India

Refrain: Jesus Saviour, Lord Lo to Thee I fly;

Saranam, Saranam Saranam;

Thou the Rock, my Refuge that's higher than I;

Saranam, Saranam Saranam

1. In the midst of foes I cry to Thee,
From the ends of earth wherever I may be,
My strength in helplessness, O answer me;
Sarana, Saranam Saranam
Refrain

2. In Thy tent give me a dwelling place,
And beneath Thy wings may I find sheltering grace,
O lift on me the sunshine of Thy face;
Saranam, Saranam Saranam
Refrain

3. O that I my vows to Thee may pay,
And that by Thy faithfulness to me each day,
May live, and on Thy love my burdens lay;
Saranam, Saranam Saranam
Refrain

4. Yesterday, today for e'er the same,
Lo, the heritage of all who bear His name
To ransom them from sin the Saviour came:
Saranam, Saranam Saranam

Confession

Silence to confess our sins, the sins of our nation and the world.

Leader: Let us continually turn towards God and away from all that competes with God in our lives.

Music: Alison Adam; arr. John L. Bell

pleadingly

Cantor: My eyes are dim with weep - ing and my pil - low soaked with

Oh _____

tears.

— ALL: FAITH - FUL GOD RE - MEM - BER ME —

Response: My eyes are dim with weeping
and my pillow soaked with tears

ALL: Faithful God, remember me

Voice: God, do not punish us in your anger,
Our guilt is heavier than we could carry.

Response: My eyes are dim with weeping
and my pillow soaked with tears
FAITHFUL GOD, REMEMBER ME

Voice: We have shirked our responsibilities,
and been silent in the face of corruption and violence,
The light in us has turned to darkness.

Response: My eyes are dim with weeping
and my pillow soaked with tears
FAITHFUL GOD, REMEMBER ME

Voice: We have hurt others and become slaves
to worldly desires in spite of the
tear drop you shed for Jerusalem

Response: My eyes are dim with weeping
and my pillow soaked with tears
FAITHFUL GOD, REMEMBER ME

Voice: We confess our sins against humanity,
individually, as a nation and as a continent.
God, don't give up on us, don't stay away
from us. Come, please help us

Response: My eyes are dim with weeping
and my pillow soaked with tears
FAITHFUL GOD, REMEMBER ME

Minister: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
This is the gracious word of our Lord Jesus Christ:
'Your sins are forgiven.'

All: Amen. Thanks be to God.

Praise

Leader: Having been forgiven of our sins, let us rise and give glory to God:

To God be the glory great things He hath done
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the lifegate that all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice
Oh come to the Father through Jesus the Son
And give Him the glory
great things He hath done.*

Collect - Leader: Almighty God, the Ultimate Reality that You Are, for there is no other God, who has called your people to live in peace and breathed on them your peace. With a tear drop, look graciously upon the troubled spots of Asia and very specially on this our land. Give a knowledge of the presence of the Risen Christ to the members of the churches in the Christian Conference of Asia that they may be strengthened to serve you continually in righteousness, justice and peace in spite of subtle persecution and corruption, to the glory of your name and that all beings be well and happy, receiving God's peace, God's peace, God's peace. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Children's Time

All sit.

Children shall present a skit or artwork on their view of a bleeding Asia and God's concern and compassion, or the hope of the resurrection.

Readings

Old Testament Lesson or a reading from an Asian writer or religious literature

e.g. Jer. 8:22 – 9:1, 23 – 24

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God**

OR

Tagore's 'Where the mind is without fear'

Reader:

A poem from Gitanjalee by the Asian Nobel Laureate, Rabrinthanath Tagore.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by
 narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depth of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
 Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into
 the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening
 thought and action –
 Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Reader: Christ speaks to us through others,

All: Praise God

Reader 2: Listen for the word of God.

The reading comes from the Letter to the Hebrews chapter 5:5-10.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

All: Thanks be to God

Hymn (*To be selected*) – *The Reader 3 will bring the Bible in procession accompanied by lamps, flowers and dancing children.*

All (Sing): Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen
Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen

*Words: traditional liturgical
Music: Korean, source unknown; arr. John L. Bell*

deliberately **last time**

Hal-le-lu - jah! Hal-le-lu - jah! Hal-le-lu-jah! A - men. _____

Hal - le - lu - jah! A - men. (Hal-le-lu, -jah!)

Reader 3: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy
(Psalm 126:5).

Listen to the Good News proclaimed in the Gospel
of Luke, Chapter 19, verses 41 – 48

All (Sing): Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen
Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen

Reader 3: Luke 19:41 – 48

This is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All (Sing): Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen
Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Hallelu Yah! Amen

Sermon

Creed: *The Nicene Creed* (All Stand)

We believe in one God
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate
of the Virgin Mary
And was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance
with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
The Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father;
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified;
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Supplication

Intercessor: Let us come to God today with a concern for mission and social action, remembering that God is interested not simply in collecting Christians, but in renewing creation.

Lord, give to your Church, we pray, a profound concern for the well-being of the world you made. Guide our Church and the CCA leaders into judgments that are just and compassionate. Give us words which are wise and incisive. We have to speak for the Church at the moment about many

different issues in Asia, such as... [*please allow people to share their concerns*]. May we have time to ponder, experts to give us good advice, and the insight which comes from you alone. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Lord, give to us also, we pray, here in this church, and the Christians scattered all over Asia, wisdom to understand the gospel in its totality and to live it in our daily lives. Give us a concern for the well-being of our schools and teachers, for the quality of our community life and local councillors, for the treatment of our weak and marginalized members. [And here we pray in particular for ... *issues in the community...*]

Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Intercessor: Lord, we know that it is so much easier to relate our faith to our interior life, and our home and church life. But your vision is so much bigger. What use is a cosy church if society around us is in despair? Open our minds and hearts to confront the darkness with justice, and to embrace the broken with love. Here in our imagination are many people:

- a family of a minority community who dare not leave the house at night: we pray for them
- a human rights activist and journalist assaulted mercilessly to get a false confession. We pray for him ...

- a young woman whose childhood abuse has ruined her relationships with men: we pray for her
- an old lady who only got two cards at Christmas, still on her mantelpiece in June: we pray for her ...
- a young man unfairly sacked from his job because of his convictions: we pray for him.

Lord, we pray that you will empower us to proclaim the gospel in ways that will witness to the words and deeds of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve, and not to save his life but to give it up in the cause of God's reign. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Intercessor: Pour on us, O Lord, the spirit of loving-kindness with a tear drop of compassion for Asia; so that sprinkled by the dew of your blessings, we may be made glad by your glory and grace; through Jesus the Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Offertory Hymn

Offertory Prayer

Presider: All things come from you O Lord and of your own have we given you (1 Chron. 29:14b). We here present ourselves and with us the CCA symbolically for use in your service in Asia. Accept us with a tear drop of your loving-kindness, and enable us in our land to work for justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with you, our God. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving

A lamp may be lit in front of a large map of your country or of Asia.

Voice: We love you, God our strength.
You have made darkness your veil, in order that
you may bring treasures from dark vaults and show us
gems from secret places, even with a tear drop.

All: **Thanks be to God**
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Voice: We love you, God our strength.
For you have given us beautiful lands in Asia
producing food for us to eat, water to drink
and a lovely environment to live in. Though
darkness covers the people, your light shines
in the darkness, even with a tear drop.

All: **Thanks be to God**
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Voice: We love you, God our strength.
For you have inspired our founders to form the
Christian Conference of Asia to serve justice and
peace, and made your Church to be a lamp and
called your people to be a light for the world
until that great day dawns
when there will be no need for lamp or sun
because the glory of the Lord will
shine on God's people, and the Lamp of God
will give them light, even with a tear drop.

All: Thanks be to God
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Presider: Let us sum up our prayers saying the family prayer
that the Lord Jesus has taught us:

All: *Our Father in heaven
Holy be your name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those
Who sin against us.
Do not bring us to the test
But deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours,
Now and for ever. Amen.*

After a period of deep silence, all will say or sing this Triple Refuge



The Thisaranaya (Triple refuge)

Oba piya devikara saranaya ganimi

(I take my refuge in you, the Father, accepting you as God)

Oba kithu himikara saranaya ganimi

(I take my refuge in you, the Son, accepting you as God)

Oba sudha tindukara saranaya ganimi

(I take my refuge in you blest Spirit, accepting you as Lord)

Oba eka devikara saranaya ganimi

(I take my refuge in you three, acknowledging you as one God)

Obe sura sasunehi saranaya pathami

(I look for refuge in your holy church)

Obe ana vinayehi saranaya pathami

(I look for refuge in your own precepts)

Obe subha dahamehi saranaya pathami

(I look for refuge in your noble word)

Obe mema sangayehi saranaya pathami

(I look for refuge in this your community)

Peace

All Stand

Presider: We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, be at peace among yourselves ... always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing. Greet one another with a holy kiss. (*1 Thess. 5:12a, 13b, 16 – 17, 26*)

All:

**Peace among nations,
Peace among peoples,
Peace among churches
Peace among neighbours
The peace of Christ above all.**

All move around making a symbolic greeting of friendship in a cultural manner, saying to each other:

Peace/Shanthi/Salom or any such national word

Choir:

The peace of the earth be with you.
the peace of the heavens too;
the peace of the rivers be with you,
the peace of the oceans too.
Deep peace falling over you;
God's peace growing in you.

Words: Guatemalan traditional; trans. Christine Carson
 Music: Guatemalan traditional; arr. John L. Bell

gently

The peace of the earth - be with you, the peace of the heavens too; - the
 peace of the rivers be with you, the peace of the oceans too -

Deep peace falling over you;
 Deep - peace, deep - peace - falling over you;

God's peace growing in you.
 God's - peace, God's - peace - growing in you.

The Christaraksha (*Benediction*)

Presider (holding a wooden cross if so acceptable – Num. 21:9)

May the Cross of the Begotten of God, who is mightier than all the powers of evil, and more glorious than all the angels of heaven, abide with you wherever you go! By evening, night and day, at all times and in all places may God protect and defend you!

From the influence and anger of sinful persons, from the temptations of the devil, from known and unknown foes, from all low passions and human weaknesses that beguile the soul, body and spirit, may the Spirit of God guard, protect and deliver you. **Amen.**

Final Hymn (your choice from your own church hymnbook or from *Sound the Bamboo*)

- **Introduction**

The theme being selected symbolizes Sri Lanka as the tear drop of Asia in the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka is now known for all the political harassments that bring nothing but suffering. For Christians suffering is not the end or final experience. The theology of cross confirms this and we do trust that the cross has become an experience of both suffering and victory. The theology of cross always has two ends just as the cross physically has two wooden pieces. The two ends symbolize suffering and joy, losing and gaining. Some of those ends that meet at the cross are defeat and victory, past and future, God and human, sadness and happiness. 'Tear drop' has a similar theology as the cross being pictured.

- ***Psalms 42:3 – My tears have been my food day and night.***

Life always has two sides. The wheel of life circles around with both suffering and joy of human experience. The psalmist considers his or her tears not as a negative component of life but as a positive one. Like daily food, tears are also consumed to build up power in life.

- ***Psalms 39:12 – Hear my prayer O Lord, and give ear to my cry: hold not thy peace at my tears.***

Peace and conflict are another two ends in human life. How can peace in life be restored? The psalmist's belief is that tears will bring peace in his or her life. God will not hold God's peace at the moment of shedding tears. Tears can even break the barriers of power of God. Theologically tear is a natural

weapon God has given in the life of humans. This is why sadness becomes happiness at once when one has a sentimental experience.

- *John 11:35 – Jesus wept.*

This is the shortest verse that we can see in the whole Bible. We could also firmly say that this is the logo of Christian faith. John knows well that the resurrection of Lazarus is going to happen in the next moment. Nevertheless he portrays Jesus as shedding tears. Jesus here sheds tears not only for his love for Lazarus but also for the joy that a great sign is going to be performed. The whole experience of cross is here pictured in a vivid manner. Love, death, resurrection, hope, etc. being showed in this person called Jesus who is divine and human at the same time. Tears are not human only, but Godly too.

- *Lk. 7:38 – (The sinful woman) standing behind him at his feet weeping and began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*

Tears here in this passage being pictured are not only a symbol of feminism but also picture women as ministers in the messianic enterprise. Jesus explains what forgiveness means through a parable of two debtors in the later verses. Forgiveness and acceptance are two entities in the era of the messiah and feminism is a main tool in this effect. Women could become powerful part in the Church in the ordained ministry, utilizing all special resources that women only have.

- *Lk. 7:44 – Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house, you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.”*

Water and tears are made similar or compared in this passage. The Gospel of John especially explains their significance as

sacraments. The sacraments are normally symbolized through water, wine and bread and those that are closely connected to the tears and sweat of humans. A sacrament (baptism) through tears and not through water may be much more meaningful as tear is a product of the human body and not from an outside source. Sacraments should be a human experience and not merely connected to water and wine. This thought confirms the theology of sacraments and inner transformations of human self without being pictured through outward symbols.

- *Lk. 19:41- 42 – And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, saying, “Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!”*

Peace and tears go together in this passage. St. Luke says that while Jesus was drawing near to the city of Jerusalem he wept over it. Lack of peace and concern for the people are the reasons for Jesus to weep. This also refers to violence. Jesus shed tears for lack of peace in the city. God is the God of the universe and everything that is created. God saw everything that was made good. It is human beings with craving for power and greed who have desecrated God’s creation and brought immense suffering to the people. In Christian terminology it is referred to as sin. Jesus wept for the sin of the people which has brought this condition to the city. Hope emerges from the hopeless and miserable situation. It comes with identification, solidarity, sympathy and hope for a new creation.

Prepared by Pon Anandarajah

Additional

Songs or Hymns

Sound the Bamboo, 179

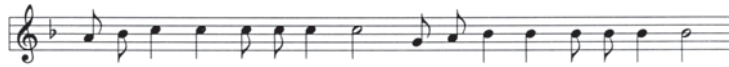
GRANDEUR OF GOD



1. *A - thi shu - dha, a - thi shu - dha, a - thi shu - dha dev pi - ye,*
2. *Sa - u ba - la sa - u ba - la sa - u ba - la ye - su - nay,*
1. O most ho - ly, O most ho - ly O most ho - ly LORD our God,
2. O Lord Je - sus, O Lord Je - sus, O Lord Je - sus, Sav - ior true,
3. *Grac - ious Spir - it, grac - ious Spir - it, grac - ious Spir - it, grant us power,*



Wa - di - nu - wa a - pa we - tha o - ba me - tha - paa - min.
Ku - ma - ta - the o - ba ha - ra we - na ki - si - wek a ney.
send your bless - ing from be - yond us, let us know your great love.
all our hope is in your mer - cy, you a - lone re - main strong.
give us strength to wait up - on you, may we see your will done.



Wa - di - nu - wa a - pa we - tha, Wa - di - nu - wa a - pa we - tha.
Ku - ma - ta - the o - ba ha - ra, Ku - ma - ta - the o - ba ha - ra.
Send your bless - ing from be - yond us, send your bless - ing from be - yond us,
All our hope is in your mer - cy, all our hope is in your mer - cy,
Give us strength to wait up - on you, give us strength to wait up - on you,



Wa - di - nu - wa a - pa we - tha o - ba me - tha - paa - min.
Ku - ma - ta - the o - ba ha - ra we - na ki - si - wek a - ney.
send your bless - ing from be - yond us, let us know your great love.
all our hope is in your mer - cy, you a - lone re - main strong.
give us strength to wait up - on you, may we see your will done.

- Sun by day gives warmth, brings each bud into flower;
moon's lustrous light hallows the night;
who but the LORD can ordain, empower
worlds both great and small, each to have its hour?
- I can frame no words which will match angel's psalms;
heaven and earth tell of God's worth.
All we can do is to rest in God's arms
captured by one Name, Love, and its sweet charms.

Words: E. Walter Marasinghe, Sri Lanka

Music: DEV TUMA MAV; E. Walter Marasinghe, Sri Lanka

Sound the Bamboo, 286

O Most Holy, O Most Holy

(♩ = 112)



1. I - meg - moy pi - tak ay yay I - meg - moh a -
 2. Pan - ta - ne - man i - pi - tak Tak - lay i ma -
 1. LORD, your hands have formed this world, ev - ery part is
 2. Yours the soil that holds the seed, you give warmth and
 3. Sweet po - ta - toes fill our bags, when the gar - den



da - tak - lay. I - meg - moh a - da da - nom, Eg - gew tan wa -
 ngi - to - dak, Da - nom i an ma - ni - bog, Eg - gew i on
 shaped by you. Wa - ter tum - bling o - ver rocks, air and sun - light:
 mois - ture, too. Sprout - ing crops and bloss - om buds, trees and plants: the
 yields its due. Chick - ens run, and pigs grow plump, chil - dren too: your



day e - dom, Ga - yom ni hi - ga - mi.
 da - da od Ga - yom ni hi - ga - mi.
 each day's signs that you make all things new.
 sea - sons' signs that you make all things new.
 boun - ty's signs that you make all things new.

3. *Shudhathma, shudhathma, shudhathma, devinde,* 4. Holy holy Trinity blest,
Savi bala thenu mana yethenata sevaye. Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Savi bala thenu mana, Savi bala thenu mana, at your name, your people humbly bow,
Savi bala thenu mana, yethenata sevayee. as we come before you now.
 At your name, your people will bow,
 4. *Thrii eka, thrii eka, thrii eka, devinde,* at your name, your people will bow,
Api oba abiyasa sitinemu bathine. at your name, your people humbly bow
Api oba abiyasa, Api oba abiyasa, as we come before you now.
Api oba abiyasa, sitinemu bathine.

Words: Anonymous, Sri Lanka; para. Shirley Murray

Music: ATHI SHUDHA; Anonymous, Sri Lanka

Children's Pages

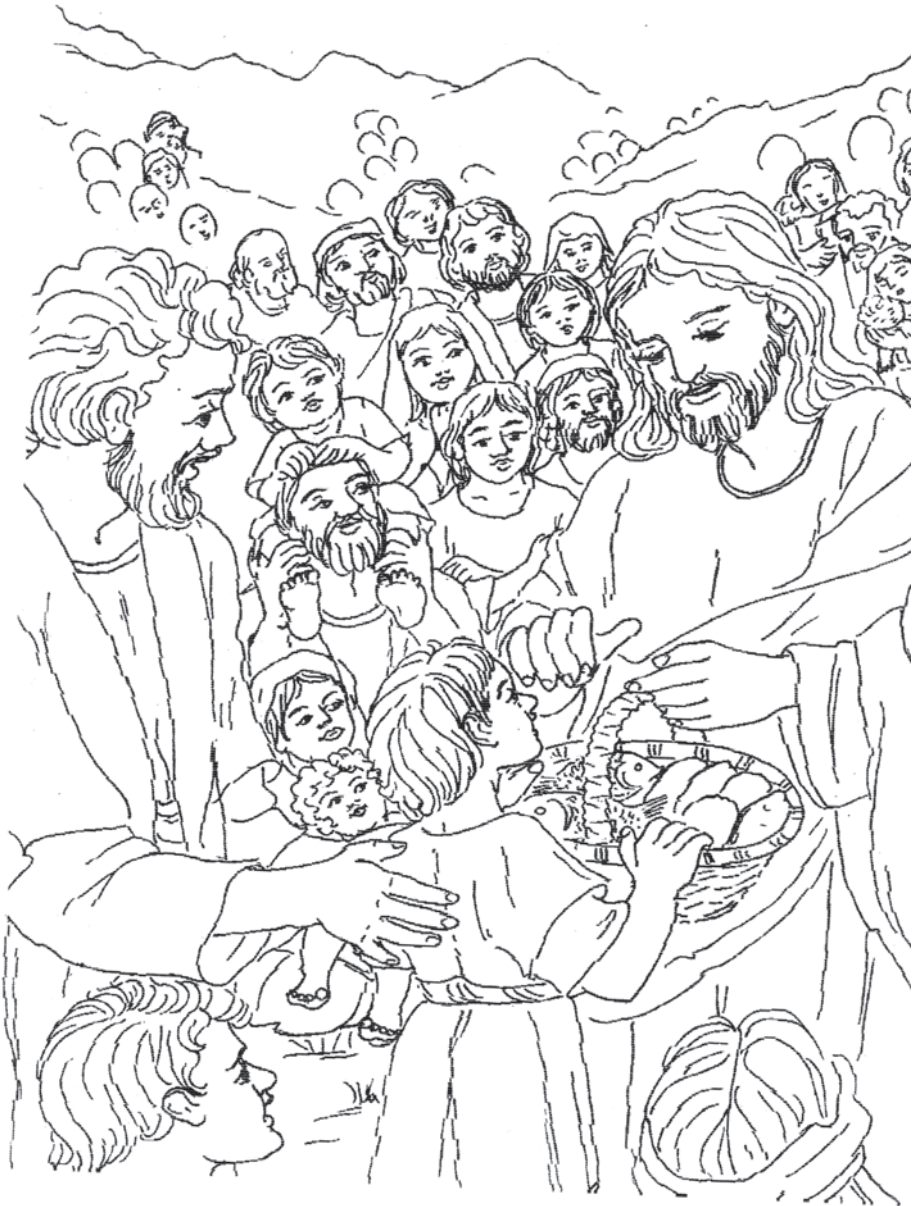
Jesus heals - Jairus' daughter



Jesus cares - Blessing the children



Jesus blesses - The Offering of bread, fish



Acknowledgement

Asia Sunday 2009 Committee from NCCSL:

Rev. Joshua Ratnam (Diocese of Colombo)

Rev. Pon Anandarajah (Methodist Church)

Dr. Narmasena Wickremasinghe (Diocese of Colombo)

Ms. Lakshini Fernando, General Secretary, Ceylon Bible Society

Rev. Willie Ranasinghe (Baptist Sangamaya) was invited, but sent apologies.

Cover Design – Rev. Ranjana Karunaratne (Diocese of Kurunagala)

Credits & Apologies:

Christian Conference of Asia, *Sound the Bamboo:*

CCA Hymnal 2000

There are other songs suggested by the NCCSL committee but unfortunately we could not get their complete publication details on time.

Asia Sunday Staff Committee from CCA:

Dr. Hope S. Antone, coordinator

Rev. Freddy de Alwis

Mr. Adam Row

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May we all have a meaningful Asia Sunday!

Hope S. Antone
Joint Executive Secretary
Faith, Mission and Unity



Christian Conference of Asia

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