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THE EDITOR THE MORNING STAR NO. 39, FUSSELS LANE, COLOMBO-06, SRI LANKA.

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Righteousness Exalteth A Nation But Sin is a Reproach to any people.

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Indian Bishop's Murder:

Police enquiry reveals a case of conspiracy and murder. With the hired killers behind bars, the police is probing into the role of "higher functionaries" of the Lutheran Church in the murder. The Bishop Rt. Rev. Emmanuel. is the President (Moderator) of the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church. Investigations reveal that there were feuds between two rival groups of the church and there was a lot of litigation involved. On Saturday July 29 as the Bishop came out of his church office and proceeded to his residence, also on the same premises, hired rowdies, pounced on him and attacked him with axes and knives.

PEOPLE OF CHUNDIKULI RETURN HOME:

People of Chundikuli who moved into Valigamam West and Vadamarachy during the conflict in April - May 2000 are slowly returning to their homes at Chundikuli. Increasing thefts and house breaking have compelled them to spend their day time in their houses and sleep in safer places in the nights.

A LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE:

Senator Benjamin Hillman Chairman of International Relations Committee of U.S. Congress has written to U.S. Secretary of State Mrs. Madeline Albright about the deteriorating situation in Jaffna.

He has pointed out that the time has come for the U.S. to play a positive role in solving the problem in Sri Lanka. He has explained the on-going peace initiatives and the stand of India and the warring parties. In this critical juncture it is imperative for USA to make clear its position. The government of Sri Lanka has a long history of violation of human rights in the case of minority Tamils. News censorship and the ban on the supply of food, medicines and other essential items to Tamil speaking areas have worsened human rights problems. He has also said that USA should refrain from training Sri Lankan forces and supplying arms to Sri Lankan government.

OBITUARY :

MRS NAGAMMAH BENJAMIN

The death occurred on Wednesday the 19th July 2000 of Mrs. Alice Nagammah Benjamin, the wife of the late Mr. Benjamin of Karainagar.

The funeral took place at the residence of her daughter 42/18 Cemetery Road, Vijayapura, Batticaloa on Saturday the 22nd July.

She leaves behind Rev. Benjamin Jeyarajah, Jeyakulendran, Jeyanesan, Jeyapalan (sons) and Pushparajamani, Selvaranee & Aputhamalar (daughters).

MEMORIAL SERVICE:

A service to thank God for the life and witness of the late Mrs. Saraswathy Somasundram was conducted at Uduvil Church on Saturday the 29th July. The service was led by the Rev. A. S. Thevagananthan. After the service the memorial tomb stone at Uduvil Mission cemetery was unveiled by Bishop Jebanesan.

A fellowship tea followed in the Uduvil Girls' College campus.

TRAGEDY IN HIGH SEA:

Mrs. Mary Vanitha Johnson was one of the four persons who survived after the tragic events in Gulf of Mannar on Monday the 17th July. She related her story as follows:

We left Jaffna in 1995 to live in Wannu during "the leap forward" operations. While we were moving out of Jaffna my husband was killed by gun shot injuries. I was living with my mother and son at Naachikudah in the Wannu region. My husband's elder brother is living in Kanniyakumari in India. I was asked to marry him as second bed. He had asked me to come over to Kanniyakumari. So I went to Mannar with my son and waited for a boat. On

BISHOP KULANDRAN BIRTH CENTENARY:



The Birth Centenary of the Late Bishop Sabapathy Kulandran falls on the 23rd September 2000. Elaborate arrangements are made to celebrate the birth centenary of the revered Bishop.

The Diocese is planning to combine it with the Annual Diocesan Festival and Evangelistic Festival, since both the Diocese and Evangelism were dear to the heart of Bishop Kulandran.

Monday the 17th we were informed that a boat was leaving for India. There were 25 people in the boat. I gave Rs.12,000/= for my son, myself and my husband's younger brother who had joined us in Mannar. In high sea our boatmen saw an Indian fishing vessel and handed over 12 of us to them and returned to Mannar. The fishermen in the Indian vessel were drunk and refused to take us to India. They threatened to throw us into the sea. But later they promised to take us to Pesalai in Mannar. While boat was going towards Pesalai it hit a sandy place in the sea. The boatmen shouted that they had reached Pesalai and wanted us to jump out. When we refused they pushed each one of us into the sea. I hugged my 7 year old son and went into the sea. Three times we went down and came up. After sometime a massive wave came and pulled my son away. I lost all senses and at 2.00 a.m. I was in the Karisal sea coast in Mannar District.

UDUVIL WINS ALL PLACES

At the Inter-School English drama competition conducted by the Department of Education on Tuesday the 18th July 2000, Uduvil Girls' College came out with flying colours. They won the first places in poetic drama (Seniors) Dialogue Drama (Seniors) Drama (Juniors) and Drama (Primary).

REQUEST FOR CEASEFIRE: -

Mr. Anton Ponniah the Chairman of Chavakachechi Pradesha Saba has written to President of Sri Lanka to order one week ceasefire in Chavakachechi. He has made this request on behalf of the people of the area who want to go to their houses and salvage their documents and movable properties. He has pointed out that most of them fled Chavakachechi during the outbreak of conflict leaving behind their valuable things and certificates.

Dear Reader

We wish to thank you most sincerely for the support you are giving to the "Morning Star". We appreciate your comments, news items & letters. You will be happy to know that now the "Morning Star" is the oldest Newspaper in Sri Lanka (Ceylon Observer ceased to exist on 28.04.2000). The paper is run with a heavy subsidy even by the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Your prompt payment of subscription will encourage us.

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NEW ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Cabinet of Ministers has approved the introduction of a new electoral system replacing the present system. This would be the 17th amendment to the present existing constitution. It is expected that the Bill would be presented in this current session of Parliament, before its dissolution. Parliament has to be dissolved on or before the 24th August & the elections are expected to be held either in October or November. It is also possible that the required Referendum, for the acceptance of the new Constitution, too would be held together with the General Elections.

A NEW CONSTITUTION IN PARLIAMENT

The President presented the historic draft Constitution on Thursday 3rd August 2000 in Parliament, designed to solve the ethnic problem in the Island and usher in peace and prosperity. The President's speech of one and a half-hours received ovation, in the Chamber, despite boisterous behaviour from a few members of the Opposition. She invited the UNP to support the new Constitution and end the 17 years of bloodshed, for the sake of future generations, so that all communities can live in peace and harmony.

The President asserted that there will be no division of the country and no harm to the status of Buddhism. She has since stated that she is confident of receiving the required 2/3 majority, necessary for the passage of the Bill.

BISHOP JEBANESAN 60TH BIRTH DAY WORKERS STIPEND ENDOWMENT FUND:

Women Fellowship	4,448.00
Jaffna City Mission Church	
Mr. & Mrs J C Selvarajah	1,000.00
Mr & Mrs R Sri Balaratnam	1,000.00
Rev & Mrs S C Arnold	1,000.00
Mr & Mrs Thevatheepan	500.00
Mr A J Arasaratnam	250.00
Mr R R Sinnadurai	1,000.00
Mr & Mrs Mailvaganam	100.00
Green Memorial	
Hospital Staff	3,100.00
McLeod	
Hospital Staff	775.00
Naval Church	10,000.00
Alaveddy Church	6,000.00
Manipay Church	20,000.00

EDITORIAL

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

The people Nineveh were crest-fallen. Jona had gone to that great city and said

"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

*But the king of Nineveh decided to turn to God. He decreed that all the inhabitants of Nineveh, **SHOULD FAST AND PRAY.** "Who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not." This was the hope of the king. God spared Nineveh.*

The people of Jaffna are in great peril. It is said that at the debacle at Chavakachcheri more than thousand people had perished. Many are still missing.

Now in Valigamam West and Vadamardchy the warring parties are getting set for a big onslaught. What next? Where? Are the questions uppermost in the minds of the people who have lost their loved ones and have been made paupers overnight.

For many years they have lived in the midst of wars and rumours of wars.

Internally displaced persons who have the means are leaving the peninsula with the hope of living in Colombo or migrating to a foreign country. High officials have already sent their wives and children either to Colombo or to South India. The poor people venture into the gulf of Mannar with the hope of landing on an Indian Coast. Some have already lost their lives in this gulf. Furniture and other household goods are shifted from one place to another in bullock carts and tractors. "Good news I have none" was the answer of Marley's ghost to Scrooge.

The people of Jaffna have no good news. Talks between the U.N.P. and the P.A. have failed. There is world fatigue on the Sri Lankan question. More and more sophisticated war weapons are procured. The Chavakachcheri people have not yet recovered from the horror of the multi-barreled shells used on their city.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee oh Lord" was the supplication of the Psalmist.

At these perilous times we will put our trust in God - Will He not say "And should not I spare Jaffna that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand and also much cattle?"

As Christians, we will not retaliate: The teaching of Jesus Christ does not allow this. We refuse to be coerced to join the evil forces that create disharmony among the communities of different faiths in our country, with its long tradition of inter-faith tolerance. Christians must learn not only to co-exist and cooperative with others in nation building and people's development, but also pro-exist, to live for the sake of others.

As Indian citizens we have every right to practice, profess and propagate our faith in this country. It is true that many Christians motivated by the love of Christ are involved in charity and development activities among the tribals and dalits. A negligible number of foreign missionaries also participate in such humanitarian activities. Dr. Staines is one who has worked among leprosy patients for 34 years in Orissa, a veritable Father Damien. The Government has the solemn duty of protecting these men and women committed to the cause of humanity, and to guarantee fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

Christian fundamentalism also stands condemned. The extremists and fanatics in the Churches who belittle other faiths, use unfair means for proselytism if any, should be controlled and disciplined. The Church does not want to increase its members, but hold on to its sacred duty to share the love of Christ, which is transforming the lives of individual persons and structures of injustice in the society. In Father Samuel Rayan's words, "conversion of the evil structures of the heart and society." This is what evangelism, 'gospelisation', means. The basic Christian message is to follow Christ, to follow the way of the cross, i.e., to take up suffering for the sake of the marginalised and the oppressed. This is done with the resurrection hope, that finally evil will be destroyed and a new life, of love and peace, will rise from the tomb of hatred and violence. If anyone wants to join the fellowship of the Church, by their own decision, they would be welcome. But one can follow the way of the Cross remaining within the Hindu cultural milieu as well. The choice belongs to the concerned person. One hopes that "the reconversion" claimed by the VHP will also be done in that way and not by social coercion or material benefits. The freedom of conversion is available to persons of all faiths and of no faith, in our country.

The basic issue at stake is a simple fact, no more a secret. The Tribals and dalits - some of whom claim that they do not practice the Hindu faith but follow their own tribal and traditional faiths - have been exploited for centuries by persons of higher caste in the Hindu Society. As they become educated and develop in themselves a new level of awareness of their selfhood and dignity, they refuse to let themselves be part of an unequal social system. They begin to revolt. They refuse to be treated as slaves or worse, as sub-humans. In conversion to Christianity they seek social liberation. As for example, it happened in the former Travancore State among the backward castes and the dalits about 200 years ago. In fact, this must be taken as a positive challenge to Hinduism for its own 'conversion', a reform from within. I believe that even if all the poor in the country are brought above the economic poverty line, we cannot be called a developed nation, until every one is lifted above the social indignity line.

Today one speaks of the global village. Some Hindu swamis claim that they are converting some youth in Europe and USA. This is true. Most often, if one did a study, it can be found that these are not Christian believers, but secularized young people searching for a new spirituality, and are attracted by the best in Hindu philosophy and religion. Nobody resents this. Religious faith is a matter of personal choice, and religious freedom is a part of fundamental human rights. Western governments allow the building of temples and mosques in their countries. Liberal Christians there do not want to deny freedom to worship, to practice and to propagate the Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and other faiths in their midst. That is also the meaning of secularism, as they see it. Inter-faith dialogues in these countries and in India help persons to understand and respect the truths of each other's faith. And it is a well-known fact that funds collected by the Western churches are given to Hindu organizations as well as Christian organizations serving the marginalised people in India; some donors insisting that their donations be spent to benefit beneficiaries without any distinction of caste and creed.

The Prime Minister has called for a national dialogue on conversion. Some political parties have expressed support to this idea.

(Contd...Page 4)

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH !

By Samuel Amirtham

(A Christian response to attacks on Christians)

Any community comes to the end of patient endurance when atrocities are brutally heaped over it continuously and undeservedly. The Christian community in India has now been made a target of violent attacks in the recent months, by fundamentalistic Hindu extremists. In a tolerant Mother India some of us had taken this as a distortion of fundamentals of the Hindu faith by fanatics. But there is growing evidence that these attacks are well orchestrated and planned. The preachers of Hindutva definitely share the responsibility for this partly. Secret documents and planned strategies of some fundamentalist groups have come to the knowledge of the public. Systematic destruction of Christian Churches and prayer halls in South Gujarat - more than 35 to date - has created much anxiety and fear among the tiny minority of helpless Christians there. Representations have been made to the President and Prime Minister who have sympathetically listened to the genuine grievances.

Now the brutal murder of Graham Staines and his two young boys has caused inexpressible horror and unbearable grief to Christians, and indeed to members of all communities as the huge crowd at their funeral indicated. Some one should shout from the rooftops, 'enough is enough'.

The problem is not that the perpetrators of violence and hatred create such incidents, but that the Government has permitted the growth of an ethos and climate in the country where such incidents become daily events - no more news events. The inactivity or the powerlessness of the government to control such a situation is evident. The rape of innocent Catholic nuns is a case in point. As the President said in his address to the nation on Republic day, rapes are done not so much because of lust, but as an expression of a brutal way of social revenge and punishment. The Christian church condemns not only this ghastly incident, but all cases of rapes reported every day in our newspapers. While the whole nation condemns all such atrocities on women, the question remains, who is responsible for the increasingly favourable ethos that make these crimes happen. Christians all over the country are under the cloud of great grief. The death penalty is suggested by the Home Minister, but the number of victims is only on the increase.

At the recent Synod of the Church of South India, comprising the 4 Southern States, 21 Dioceses and 3 million Christians - members pleaded passionately that some effective protest be demonstrated, representations to the State Governments and Central Government made, so that appropriate action can be taken against the culprits and steps taken that such incidents do not recur. The Synod under the leadership of the Most Rev. William Moses, the Moderator and the Rev. G. Devasirvadam, the General Secretary was unanimous in its voice.

யுத்தத்தின்....

தென்மராட்சியில் நடைபெறுகின்ற யுத்தத்தால் முழுமையாக பாதிக்கப்பட்ட சாவகச்சேரி நுணாவில் கைதடி மக்கள் மிகவும் மோசமாக பாதிக்கப்பட்டு ஏதிலிகளாக்கப்பட்ட நிலையில் தம் சொந்த இடங்களை விட்டு இடம் பெயர்ந்து இன்று யாழ் குடாநாட்டின் பல பாகங்களிலும் அடைக்கலம் பெற்றுக்கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். இவ்வாறு அடைக்கலம் பெற்றதோர் தங்கள் உடமைகள் எல்லாவற்றையும் இழந்த நிலையில் ஏக்க பெருமூச்சுக்களோடு புதிய இடங்களில் ஆதரவுக் கரங்களின் உதவிகளை எதிர்பார்த்து தங்கள் அன்றாட ஜீவியத்தை நடத்தி வருகிறார்கள்.

திருச்சபை மக்களும் தங்கள் அடைக்கலம் பெற்ற இடங்களில் உள்ள திருச்சபைகளில் உள்ள மக்களின் அன்பிலும் ஐக்கியத்திலும் நிலைத்திருப்பதோடு இறை நம்பிக்கையும் பெலப்பட்டு வருகிறார்கள். தங்கள் திருச்சபையின் உறவுகளையும் மென்மேலும் வளர்த்தும் வருகிறார்கள். திருச்சபை மக்களில் சாவகச்சேரியைச் சேர்ந்த திருமதி. கந்தப்பு குடும்பத்தினர் திருமதி சரஸ் குடும்பத்தினர் திருமதி கிருபையர்ணம் திரு. சோமநாதர் நுணாவில் திரு. வெற்றிவேல் ஆகியோர் இருக்கின்ற இடத்தில் கடவுளின் கிருபையால் பாதுகாப்புடனும் சுகத்தோடும் இருக்க பிரார்த்திக்கின்றோம். - "தேசமே பயப்படாதே மகிழ்ந்து களிகூரு கடவுள் பெரிய காரியங்களைச் செய்வார்" என்ற உறுதியான நம்பிக்கையோடு கடவுளுக்குள் நிலைத்திருப்போம். அவரே நம்மை ஆதரித்து எங்கள் பாதகளை செவ்வை பண்ணுவார்.

அருட். திரு. P. எச். வசந்தகுமார்
சாவகச்சேரி சபை ஊழியன்

எஸ். ஜே. எழுதுவது

கம்பீரமான சோகம்

நாடு நலவுறுகின்றது ! வீடுகள் தரைமட்டமாக்கப்படுகின்றன !!
விதைவகையும் அனாதைகளும் நாட்டில் அதிகரித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கின்றன !!

வீட்டையிறந்தவர்கள் ஆவணங்களை இழந்தவர்கள் அருமையானவர்களை இழந்தவர்கள் அழுகின்றனர்.

மக்கள் இருவகைப்படுவர் ! துன்பங்கள் எல்லாம் தம்மைத்தான் வாட்டுகின்றன என்று நினைத்து தம்மையே நினைத்துக் கண்ணீர்வடிப்பவர்கள் ஒரு சாரர். துன்பங்கள் சமுதாயத்தை நாசமாக்குகின்றதென்று நினைத்து சமுதாயத்தை நினைத்துக் கண்ணீர் வடிப்பவர்கள் இன்னொரு சாரர். அவர்கள் தமது நஷ்டங்களைவிட சமுதாயத்தின் அழிவையே சிந்தித்துக் கலங்குபவர்கள். வறுமையினாலும் நோயினாலும் அவதிப்பட்ட சுப்பிரமணிய பாரதி

நெஞ்சு பொறுக்குதில்லையே இந்த
நிலைகெட்ட மனிதரை நினைத்துவிட்டால்

என்று மனங்கசிந்து பாடினான். இதனையே கம்பீரமான சோகம் எனக் குறிப்பிடலாம்.

புனித வேதாகமத்திலே தமக்காக அழுதவர்களையும் காண்கின்றோம். சமுதாயத்திற்காக அழுதவர்களையும் காண்கின்றோம். யாக்கோபு நகோமி தாவீது மார்த்தான் ஆகியோர் தமக்கு ஏற்பட்ட துன்பங்களை நினைத்து அழுத சம்பவங்கள் நம்முள்ளத்தைத் தொடுகின்றன. தன் கணவனையும் பிள்ளைகளையும் இழந்த நகோமி

நீங்கள் என்னை நகோமி என்று சொல்லாமல்
மாரான் என்று சொல்லுங்கள். சர்வவல்லவார்
என்னை மிகவும் துன்பப்படுத்தினாரே.
என்று தெலகேமுக்குத் திருப்பிய பின் குமுறினான்

யாக்கோபு எகிப்தில் இருந்து திருப்பிய பிள்ளைகளைப் பார்த்து

-என்னைப் பிள்ளையற்றவனாக்குகிறீர்கள்.
யோசேப்பும் இல்லை சிமியோனும் இல்லை
பென்யமினையும் கொண்டு போகப் போகிறீர்கள்.
இந்தக்கஷ்டமெல்லாம் எனக்கே நேரிடுகிறது என்றான்.

தன் மகனை இழந்த தாவீது

அப்சலாமே அப்சலாமே உனக்குப் பதிலாக அப்சலாமே அப்சலாமே நான் இறந்திருந்தால் நலமாயிருக்கும் என்று கதறினான். புதிய ஏற்பாட்டில் அன்புச் சகோதரிகளான மார்த்தானையும் மரியானையும் சந்திக்கின்றோம்:

தன் சகோதரனை இழந்த மார்த்தான்:

ஆண்டவரே நீர் இங்கே இருந்திருந்தால்
என் சகோதரன் மரித்திரான் என்றான்

இவர்களுடைய சோகம் நெஞ்சைத்தொடுகின்றன. தமக்கேற்பட்ட துன்பங்களை நினைத்து அவர்கள் புலம்பினார்கள்.

ஆனால் ஏரெமியா ஏசாயா எசேக்கியேல் ஆகியோர் சமுதாயத்தின் நிலைகண்டு புலம்பினார்கள். துன்பம் தம்மை மட்டுமன்றி மக்கள் அனைவரையும் வாட்டுகின்றதென்று எண்ணிக் கலங்கினார்கள்.

தேசம் துக்கத்தால் சோர்ந்து போகிறது
லீபனோன் வெட்கி வாடுகின்றது - என்று புலம்பினார் ஏசாயா
கர்தாவே எங்களுக்கு நேர்ந்ததை நினைவும்
எங்கள் நிந்தையை நோக்கிப் பாடும்
எங்கள் சுதந்திரம் அந்நியர் வசமாயிற்று
எங்கள் வீடுகள் புறநாட்டார் வசமாயின
திக்கற்றவரானோம் தந்தையில்கலை
எங்கள் தாய்மார் விதைவைகள் போலிருக்கின்றார்கள்
பணம் கொடுத்து தண்ணீர் வாங்கிக் குடிக்கின்றோம்
எங்கள் விநாடுக்கும் வினையே கொடுக்கின்றோம்
தொடர்ந்து வருவோர் எங்கள் பிடரியைப் பிடித்தார்
களைத்துப் போனோம் இளைப்பாறுதற்கிடமில்லை.

என்று சமுதாயத்தின் சோகத்தை வெளியிட்டார் ஏரெமியா தீர்க்கர்

அவாகள அடித்துக்கொண்டு போகையில்
தனித்திருந்த நான் முகங்குப்புறு
வியுந்து ஐயோ கர்த்தராகிய ஆண்டவரே
தேவரீர் எருசலேமின் மேல் உமது உக்கிரத்தை
ஊற்றுகையில் இஸ்ரவேலில் மீறிருப்பவர்களை
யெல்லாம் அழித்துப்போடுவீரோ ?

The basic issue at stake is a simple fact, no more a secret but in the context of 2.3 % Christians alleged to be converting the rest of the population, is there any need for such a call? These points are to be noted:

Conversion is the voluntary choice of a person to follow another faith. It is to be differentiated from proselytism, trying to add members to any faith community by force, coercion or material allurements.

The best of Christian tradition is against this. The educational, health and development services of the church are not aimed at conversion, but as an expression and demonstration of commitment to Jesus Christ. He, himself, challenged the religious authorities of His time in this matter. "You hypocrites, you travel over sea and land to proselytize one; and when you have won him you make him twice as fit for hell as you are yourselves" (Mt. 23:25). This would apply to persons of any faith trying to proselytize anybody from another faith, called conversion or reconversion.

An early Christian prayer by a Saint goes like this "Lord, if I love you because of the reward of heaven, or the fear of the fire of hell, condemn me to hell; But if I love you for your sake take me to your glorious presence.

"Jesus Christ's exhortation to "make disciples, teach and baptize (Mt. 28); is often misunderstood as a call for proselytisation. Theologians of great piety and scholarship point out that the emphasis here, is in "discipling" i.e. making Sishyas and "teaching"- teachings of Jesus as summarized for example in the Sermon on the Mount. For those who are attracted by the teaching of Jesus and want to follow Him, if they desire to join the fellowship of followers, baptism is an accepted way in the Christian church. This is a tradition accepted from ancient Jewish times. Religious fellowships such as the Arya Samaj also have similar practices (e.g. Shudhi), for membership in their association.

Dr. J. Russel Chandran, the President of the Christian Union of India in an interview with Deccan Herald (Bangalore 14. 1. 1999) has pleaded that the debate we need is not on conversion, but on communalism. It is the latter that flares up the flame of intolerance and violence, social disharmony and mutual suspicion.

I believe this suggestion proves the right focus for a national debate - the evil of political strife, casteism, money and muscle power, manipulation of groups for selfish interests, etc. May be there is a need for a dialogue on Hindutva and Indiatva, the latter referring to the rich mosaic of Indian religious pluralism.

The Christian church believes and proclaims the Fatherhood of God and so the brotherhood and sisterhood of all God's children. It exhorts all true believers to voluntarily take up suffering for the benefit of others; Mother Teresa being an example par excellence of such a lifestyle. The church also wants to be a small instrument in nation building and the reconciliation of peoples in this motherland of ours. Born in Asia, Christianity came to this country before it went to Europe, and is believed to have been established by one of the disciples of Jesus, St. Thomas. To call it an alien religion is contrary to historical truth and against the best tradition of tolerance in India's long history. My gut response to the heinous crime of killing the Staineses was "enough is enough; Christians can't bear such crimes any more." But how much grief can they bear; and how much pain can they endure. Can't the State and Central Government act with severe determination? That the whole nation grieves with the Staines' and that almost all political parties and social organizations have condemned this brutal act is surely a comfort to the Staines family and to all Christians.

The Christian church need not overreact to such persecution. In its 2000 years' history it has always come through such fires purified and strengthened. The church in modern China a good example. "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church", is an early Christian experience. The grief of the people of India and of Mrs. Staines will not be in vain. But the bleeding hearts and weeping eyes of many many Indians of all faiths cry out, 'enough is enough'.

(Rt. Rev. Samuel Amirtham is the former C.S.I. Bishop of the South Kerala diocese. This article appeared in the "Masihi Sevak" a journal of Christian Ministry of U.T.C. Bangalore)

என்று கர்த்தரைப் பார்த்துக் கெஞ்சினார் எசேக்கியேல். இவர்களுடைய சோகத்தில் கெம்பீரம் இருக்கின்றது.

இந்தக் கம்பீரமான சோகத்தை கடலோசைக்கு ஒப்பிடுகின்றார் பி. ஆர். இராமையா. தாம் எழுதிய கமலாம்பாள் சரித்திரம் என்ற நூலில் கடல் அலைகளின் ஓசை கம்பீரமான சோகத்தின் ஒலி என்கிறார். கடல் ஓசையிலே தனிப்பட்ட அழகையின் நினைவு அல்ல சமுதாயத்தை நினைத்து வருந்தும் கம்பீரமான சோகத்தின் நினைவே வருகின்றது என்கிறார்.

கடலோசை விடபுருஷர்களின் விளையாட்டரவமல்ல : வாலிப ஸ்திரீகளின் வம்புக் கூப்பாடல்ல. இனிய வீணையாதிகளின் கானம் அல்ல : வெற்றித் தம்பட்டத்தின் ஓசையுமல்ல. அந்தக் குரலில் களியாட்டத் தொனி கிடையாது. சோகரசம் உண்டு. ஆனால் புத்திரனை யிழந்த பிதாவின் சோகம் புருஷனை யிழந்த மனைவியின் சோகம் முதலிய சோகங்களுக்கும் அதன் சோகத்திற்கும் சம்பந்தமில்லை. புலையன் வயிற்றிற் பிறந்து "தஸ்மாத் ஐக்கிரத ஐக்கிரத" என்று பறையறைந்த புண்ணிய புருஷருடைய இரக்கக் கலந்த சுயஞாபகமற்ற சோகத்திற்கும் "சுகமற்ற இப்பாமூலகத்தில் பந்துக்களையும் கொண்டு சுகமனுபவிக்கக் கருதுவார்களா" என்று

சோகித்த அர்ச்சனனுடைய கம்பீரியத் சோகத்திற்கும் கம்பீரியத் தன்மை மயமான கடலோசையின் சோகத்திற்கும் நிரம்ப நெருக்கமான சம்பந்தமுண்டு. ஆனால் அவர்களுடைய பறையோசையையும் குரலோசையையும் போன்று சிறுத்திராமல் அழிவற்று ஆகாயமட்டுமளவி அநேக ஆயிரம் சிரக்களையுடைய தாம் எள்ளுருத் திசைகளோடிப் பரமாத்மாவே ழுர்த்தி கரித்து நின்றுபோல் நிற்கும் ஹிமோத்பர்வதமானது திடீரென ஒரு நாள் தனது தளைப் பிரசங்கத்தை நிறுத்தி வாழ்திறந்து பேசினால் எப்படியோ அப்படிப் பெரிய, கம்பீரமான பொருள் நிறைந்த வேதரகசிய தத்துவார்த்தத்திற்குத் தக்கதோர் குரலுடனே கடலானது நம்முடன் இடையுறாது வசனிக்கிறது.

இன்று நமது நாட்டில் இருவகையான சோகங்களையும் காண்கின்றோம். கம்பீரமான சோகம், சமுதாயத்தின் முதிர்ச்சியையும் தேசப்பற்றையும் குறிக்கின்றது.