

CHAIN REACTION BIBLE SUNDAY 2006

PRAYERS, LITURGY AND SONGS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lord, there was a chain reaction
When you spoke
Stars and planets leapt into being
Chaos became order
And life sprang up across the earth.
We praise you.

Lord, there was a chain reaction
When you sent your Son
Hope came to the poor
Freedom loosed the slaves
Healing touched the weak
And your loving Kingdom burst out across the earth.
We praise you.

Lord, there is a chain reaction
When you speak through your Word
Showing us your greatness
Giving us your promises
Making us your workers
So your goodness will reach everywhere on earth.
We praise you and wait to hear you now.
Amen

(Lindsay Shaw)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Use either your own confession, the following one, or if you have more time the **Car Illustration activity** (see separate section).



Prayer

Loving God,
 your Word says "All Scripture is inspired by God
 and is useful for teaching the truth,
 rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living".
 We thank you for showing us the way so clearly.
 Please forgive us that even when we know the way we often turn away
 from it. We fail to live by your power and spoil the chain reaction of living in
 your world.
 Please forgive us and wash us from our guilt.
 Fill us with faith and the power of your Spirit to walk in your ways and
 show you in our lives.
 Through Jesus our Lord.
 Amen.

(Lindsay Shaw)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We offer a wide range of prayers here on the themes of the chain reaction
 of the Bible and the marking of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.
 Please pick or adapt the ones that will work best for your situation.

Participatory intercession

- Print or write the main headings on large sheets of card that can be seen by all the congregation. Give one card to each of four people who will stand at the front. When their turn comes, they should flip the card over to face the congregation and shout out their word.
- Give the prayers themselves to individuals in the congregation. Ask them to stand when their word is announced and read the prayer.
- Invite the congregation to say "Amen" following each section which ends with words like "Jesus who came to set all free".

Card one: The Past

Father God, as we thank you for those who gave their time and energy to change the world for good, may their commitment challenge us to change the world in our day. We thank you for William Wilberforce and ask that today's people in politics will see where the problems lie and make laws to set all free.



As many people around the world will commemorate the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act 200 years ago, would you inspire a new wave of international justice to set free those who endure present day forms of slavery.

Hear us in the name of *Jesus who came to set all free.*

Amen

Card two: The Present

Father God, as we thank you for the power of the Bible to change people and set them free from slavery to self and self-interest, help us today to act on your Word as well as hear it.

Help Bible Society to press on with its work to make the Bible heard through politics, education, the media and the arts in our country, and through translation, audio and Braille around the world.

We pray that wherever people are in slavery, as they hear your word, they will realise that you love them and that *Jesus can set them free.*

Amen

Card three: The Future

Father God, as we thank you for all that has been done, we pray for all that waits to be changed. Raise up people of faith and compassion to drive forward economic justice. Raise up people of faith and determination to seek out the truth about people trafficking, to set people free and to smash systems of exploitation. Raise up people of faith and vision to develop alternative ways for vulnerable people to live without exploitation.

Hear us in the name of *Jesus who will set all free.*

Amen

Card four: Ourselves

Father God, we thank you for the freedoms we enjoy – freedom from slavery, and oppression, freedom to worship and to know Jesus, your son. We pray that we may become your servants, speeding the spread of your truth. May our lives be contagious, spreading peace and hope. May our generosity help others to have the Bible and hear your truth. Help us by the power of your Spirit to break the chains that enslave us that we may live freely and freely spread your Word.

Hear us in the name of *Jesus who is setting us all free.*

Amen



Jamaican prayer

Keep your church free, that it may be the channel through which justice and peace, integrity and wholeness, harmony and goodwill may flow to the dispossessed and the desperate, that your kingdom may come in all its fulfilment of life and health and peace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

(From *Words for Today 2004*, IBRA, with permission)

The Wilberforce Prayer – a prayer of commitment

Almighty God, may we live above the world,
its low concerns and unsatisfying vanities,
and may we be still endeavouring to please thee,
to root out every remainder of our natural corruption,
and to increase in every Christian grace.

May we indeed bear about us the likeness of our Heavenly Father,
and be doing good in our generation to the will of God,
until at length thou shalt receive us to thyself,
and make us partakers of those pleasures which are at thy right hand for
evermore.

Amen

(Private prayer written and used throughout his life by the reformer William Wilberforce.)

The changing Kingdom

Almighty God, we pray that *through us* the transforming power of your kingdom may reach the parts of this world that nothing else can reach; bringing life in place of death, freedom in place of slavery, love and fellowship in place of hatred and discord. Use us to deliver the world from the power of the evil one and to bring in your kingdom.

(Peter Misselbrook)



Exodus prayer

May the God who led his people from slavery in Egypt, lead us now.

May the God who through that story strengthened slaves two hundred years ago, strengthen us now.

May the God who set Jesus free from death, breathe his life into our daily living.

May the God whose Word spells perfect freedom, help us to make it freely available to all people wherever they live.

Amen

Freedom litany

We pray for all those who continue the work begun by Wilberforce which we will commemorate next year ...

For those who work in our Parliament to enact laws to protect the vulnerable and those who may be trapped by slavery today. **Help them persevere.**

For those who work in immigration and the police to release those who have been trafficked and to restrict those who misuse them. **Help them succeed.**

For those who work through the United Nations and other groups to bring to people who are enslaved the freedoms which are every person's right. **Help them persevere.**

For those who work to educate us all to the modern forms of slavery and move us to change the world for the better. **Help them succeed.**

Lord, in your mercy

All: hear our prayers

We pray for all those who endure slavery in our world ...

For children who are forced to work in appalling conditions, for long hours, with little reward and no hope of a better life. **Bring them release.**

For families who are economic bond slaves and have been for generations. **Bring them release.**

For young women who have been lured to our country by prospects of a bright future and are now enslaved by the sex industry. **Bring them release.**



For those who make their fortunes through trapping and enslaving others.
Bring them release from their evil.

Lord, in your mercy
All: hear our prayers

We pray for all those who share the truth that Jesus sets all free who come to him ...

We pray for all who through their work remind people that the real freedom to be changed and to be change makers is found in Jesus. **Make their messages effective in our lives.**

We pray for Bible Society who around the world seek to open peoples' hearts and minds to the transforming power of Jesus. **May the Good News bring freedom everywhere.**

We pray for all those working through *Set All Free*, *Stop the Traffik* and other coalitions that together they may challenge our nation to end slavery in all its forms. **Make them effective in their work.**

We pray for all those who will promote the 200th Anniversary of the *Abolition of the Slave Trade Act*, that the events will inform and challenge. **May the marking of the past bring freedom today.**

And may all we are and do and say bring glory to Jesus Christ, who became a slave that all may know the true freedom of being God's children.

Lord, in your mercy
All: hear our prayers.
Amen

Celtic prayer

Suggestion: if you are using a PowerPoint or OHP, you may like to source images to illustrate each part of this prayer.

The fire draws and warms

May the commemorations of the campaign against slavery awaken us to injustice and lead us to deep regret.

May the campaigners from the past unite us to change the present and the future.



May the Bible which guided and inspired them become alive and free in us –today and always.

The sea constantly cleanses the shore

May the Word of God challenge our selfishness and set us free.

May the example of Jesus the servant inspire us to carry the burdens of others that they may be free.

May the power of God's Spirit cleanse and renew us.

The wind blows where it wills

May all imprisoned by slavery hear the wind blowing – and hope again.

May all who encourage slavery by their greed for wealth, power or sex, feel the wind blowing – and change.

May all who campaign to set others free see the wind blowing – and inspire us again.

The flowers are fragile and beautiful

May the weakness of the cross again confound the powerful structures of oppression.

May the tenderness of our faith again release people from the brutality of slavery.

May the weakness of God's Word again give back dignity through the grace which is only in Christ Jesus.

Amen

BLESSING/DISSMISSAL

An aroma of ordinary people

Chain reactions can be seen in many ways – and here comes one of them.

Take some fragrant massage oil and pour a little onto your hands. Shake hands with several assistants who, now having the fragrance on their hands, pass this on to others until it ripples around the whole congregation, creating a sweet-smelling chain.



Then use the following response:

Leader We have been set free by Jesus
All **May we also set others free**

Leader We are the sweet smell of Jesus
All **May we share it wherever we go**

(Peter Meadows/Lindsay Shaw)

Paul's prayer for us

Based on 2 Tim 3.14,15

Leader: Lord, may we continue to live in the truth,
All: **and may we know the scriptures**

Leader: may that knowledge grant us wisdom that leads to salvation,
All: **through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen**

(Luke Walton)

Blessing

To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for or even think of. To God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all times, for ever and ever!

Amen



SONG IDEAS

Note: *Most of the following are recent songs. We thought it would be easier for you to select relevant songs from those you know well but that we would suggest some newer ones you might also like to try. Naturally, you will want to choose a range of songs that reflect your style or worship and the preferences of your congregation and musicians.*

Send revival start with me – Matt Redman – SOF 2
 Light of the World – Tim Hughes – SOF 3
 God of wonders – Lord of all Creation – Baloché – SOF 2
 Lord I come to You – the power of Your love – SOF 2
 May the words of my mouth – Tim Hughes – SOF 3
 Jesus hope of the nations – Brian Doerkson – SOF 3
 Jesus lover of my soul – Paul Oakley – SOF 2
 In Christ alone – Stuart Townend – SOF 3
 When I survey – Isaac Watts – SOF 1
 Look what You've done in my life – Eoghan Heaslip – Journey In Faith, New Wine 2002
 How great is our God – Chris Tomlin – Hope, New Wine 2005
 Great Redeemer – Neil Bennetts – Hope, New Wine 2005
 One Day – Jamie Hill – Hope, New Wine 2005
 Praise Adonai – Paul Baloché – Journey In Faith, New Wine 2002
 Now in reverence and awe – Graham Kendrick – Sing Glory

SOF = Songs of Fellowship

All prayers, unless otherwise credited, are by Revd Dr David Spriggs, Bible Society Bible and Church Consultant



OUR GOD AND FATHER, WHOSE ETERNAL MIND

A new hymn by Timothy Dudley-Smith with specially written music for Bible Sunday 2006.

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Music:

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Our God and Father, whose eternal mind was written for the John Newton Project to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade act in 2007. The hymn was written to *Unde et memores* and may also be sung to *Song 1* and *Anirts*. The John Newton Project has also commissioned a new tune by Christian Stover.

Thank you to Timothy Dudley-Smith and to Jon Riding for their kind permission to include *Our God and Father, whose eternal mind* and the specially written music in the Bible Sunday resource pack 2006.



Our God and Fa - ther, whose e - ter - nal mind breathed

Chords: C, D7, Em6, Fm, Em, Am6, Em, Am, Em7, F, G7

life in - to our dust and gave us birth and of one blood

Chords: Am, Dm7, Em7, Am7, F, D7, Am, F/D, Gsus4, C, D7, G, Am

cre - a - ted hu - man - kind to live in peace as

Chords: Bm, G, C, Bm, D7, G, Am7, Em6, D7, G, Em7

fel - low - heirs of earth: for all the long - op - pressed in this our

Chords: C, Am7, C#8, D7, Gsus4, C, Bb, C, F#9, Am, Dm7, Gm, F, Gm

day, whose night is star - less, hear us as we pray.

Chords: C, Gsus4/C, Gm6, F, C, F, G7, Am, F, G#G

Our God and Father

1. Our God and Father, whose eternal mind
breathed life into our dust and gave us birth
and of one blood created humankind
to live in peace as fellow-heirs of earth:
for all the long-oppressed in this our day,
whose night is starless, hear us as we pray.
2. Our Saviour Christ once chose a servant's part,
maligned, rejected and unjustly tried;
teach us, who follow him, to lay to heart
what love he set on those for whom he died.
Before his cross, who rose and lives and saves,
we fellow sinners kneel as fellow-slaves.
3. Your Name we praise for those who fought and won
to drive the slavers' traffic from the sea;
who spent themselves until the task was done,
who broke the bonds and set the captives free:
on such a cause, on such a victor's crown,
the stars of heaven shone more brightly down.
4. Hear now our prayers for those who suffer still
oppression, terror, misery and pain;
give to your ransomed church the strength of will
to frame a world where peace and justice reign:
where those on earth rejoice with those above,
free fellow-children of a Father's love.