

God breaking into the world to bring peace

Christmas Day



God's will for justice, righteousness and peace is to be brought about across the world.

These words by Isaiah were written about a king in Judah and have been applied to subsequent kings, even the expected Messiah.

The early church heard these words and saw them reflected in the life and actions of Jesus. Today, we hear this reading as a foretelling of the birth of Jesus. This ancient song helps Christians see the birth of Christ as a celebration and as a sign of hope and confidence in God's future.

When we read this passage we too can get swept up in the desire to see God's will for justice, righteousness and peace to be brought about across the world.

For many refugees, access to basic healthcare can be incredibly difficult. For Achala, who was diagnosed with leukaemia at just eight years old, help seemed nearly impossible. Life in a refugee camp in Tamil Nadu, India, is all that Achala has ever known. She was born there and lives there with her grandmother Praveena, who fled from Sri Lanka when civil war came to her village.

"In [Sri Lanka] we were really scared of the military. We suffered a lot because there was no food. In a critical stage, we got here to India."

While life in India is safer for Praveena and her family, it hasn't been easy. With no family support and no way to earn an income, life became even harder when Achala got sick.

"We were at the hospital for three days. We were scared since it cost so much and we still had to buy medicines and injections."



As a refugee, Praveena couldn't afford the treatment for her granddaughter's leukaemia. She thought all hope was lost. But, your support changed all that and now they are looking forward to a healthy, happy future.

For the next two years, Achala was in and out of hospital. To get there, she had to travel overnight on the bus, and the cost of the transportation and medical expenses added up quickly. Her grandmother borrowed as much money as she could, but without more money for medicine and hospital visits, Achala would die.

Just when all hope seemed lost, Praveena was put in touch with the Organisation for Eelam Refugee Rehabilitation (OfERR), Act for Peace's partner organisation in India. Because of the generosity of OfERR and Christmas Bowl supporters, Achala received the medical care needed to save her life.

"Without OfERR it would have been very tough. We wouldn't have been able to save her. There would be no other way" Praveena said.

Achala's treatments were hard on her young body. She had to undergo bone marrow transplants, rounds of medications and she even lost her hair.

But, today, this brave girl is in remission and she is full of hope for her future. Achala told us:

"When I grow up I want to become a doctor. While I was sick, these doctors helped me so much and cured me.

When did I see you sick?

Act for Peace's partner, OfERR, trains healthcare workers to screen and treat refugees, provides financial assistance for patients requiring urgent hospital care, and delivers a wide range of health education sessions across the camps to help prevent further illness.



Lifesaving medical care

\$210

\$210 can provide lifesaving medical treatment for families who don't have access to basic healthcare.

So, I want to cure children who are suffering like me."

The Christmas Bowl has been bringing Christians together since 1949 to respond to God's call to feed the hungry, heal the sick and welcome the stranger. Your ongoing support is bringing hope and healing to people like Achala around the world.