

The Finemat (Ie-Toga/Samoa)

The Fine Mat (Ie Samoa), is a highly-prized treasure (taonga), in Samoan customs and way of life. Its importance is reflected in the names given it by different royal and kingly clans of Samoan society, e.g. "Ie o le Fa'aleleiga" (Cloth of Reconciliation), "Pulou o le Ola" (Shroud of Life), and "Lafitaga o Iē ua agasala" (Shield for the sinner). The fine mat is the symbol of life itself. It is sacred. It restores peace and is offered to settle disputes and conflicts. When people are covered by a fine mat, it literally means 'everyone is covered by Christ's sacrifice' thus the fine mat as far as Samoans are concerned, is the key to forgiveness in the Lord's name.

The Finemat is also symbolized as God's weaving and binding his covenant with his people. The small square designs are tailored to everyone. Weave and tie together these small graphic designs and raise the whole fabric. It represents the roles and characteristics of the person to keep and remain in the fabric of covenant between God and humans. It is an example of our collaborative work, united, our unique mission, the power we get from one another; the classic design of your heirs is included in the Finemat of Life - his Church, the seat of Grace, our dress at the heavenly feast, the mysterious body of Christ: the Ie-Toga of Life. Following is the chant used during the ceremony.

LO'U ATUA E

Lo'u Atua e lo'u Tama e
Ua ta sese i le ta feagaiga
Ta te tagi ai i so ta sulufaiga
Ia e alofa faamagalo ita

Alii e Iesu le Atua alofa
O oe lava na e faaola
O lou maliu na e togiola
Alofa ma talia lenei ifoga

Lo'u Atua e
Lo'u Tama e
Le Faaola e
Faamagalo ita

Translation
Lord Jesus our loving God
You alone saved us
Your death redeemed us
Have mercy and pardon me

My God
My Father
My Saviour
Pardon me