

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Wednesday 13th September 2023

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

Lament

"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

This was Jesus' lament, on the cross, when he was cut off from God. This has been called His spiritual suffering on the cross, as well as the physical, mental and emotional suffering he endured.

There was no answer from God.

That does not mean that God was not with Jesus. The New Testament says that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Him self on the cross. However, for Jesus, it really felt like he had been abandoned by God.

And He was honest with God.

A lament is a prayer expressing sorrow, pain, or confusion. If it was right for Jesus to ask the question, so it is right for us. There is an entire book in the bible called Lamentations. Many of us may have felt like that at times. Many people caught up in terrible situations around the world, specially thinking about Morocco and Libya, may well be asking the same question Jesus asked.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Us?"

Lamenting is also a way of participating in the pain of others. It is as Tom Wright says, for *solidarity* with the suffering. "We love our neighbor when we allow their experience of pain to become the substance of our prayer."

"Where are you God...?"

"I don't understand what is going on...?"

"This is so terrible..."

"How can you allow this to happen...?"

Although we know God does not abandon the suffering, the grieving, and that He suffers with them, and although we know that He calls people to help, it is still important to ask

the questions. It is not the same as giving into despair, it is about keeping the lines of communication open. And in that, is a tiny glimmer of hope in the darkness.

To remember Jesus, that the silence and the terrible suffering darkness of the cross was not the end for Him...