

## Thought for the day – Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

By Revd John Marshall

### Rage and Hope Daughter Zion voices her anger

L. Juliana Claassens is a Professor in Old Testament with a focus on human dignity, at the Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. She is head of the Gender unit.

In the book of Lamentations there is a portrayal of a woman battered, broken, and humiliated, who talks back to her perpetrators, calling on anyone to see and hear what the enemy has done to her.

Juliana has sought to reclaim the voice of this Personified City, representing the women in Jerusalem and the multitude of other women since who have been beaten, raped and murdered.

#### Prayer

All alone the violated woman,  
Broken body, broken spirit,  
Crying day and night.  
Daughter, princess, mother – this once glorious city.  
Enemies had entered her gates,  
Forced their way into her innermost sanctuary.  
Groaning, moaning, fainting,  
Hungry children begging for food.  
Isolated in her grief,  
Joy has departed forever,  
Killers and rapists enter her nightmares.  
Look O God, look and see what you have done to me.  
Mourning what once was my life,  
No one to comfort me, no human nor god.  
Once full of life, now only death,  
Previously honoured, now despised

Questioning your constructions of me:

Rebellious woman, filthy whore, worthless trash.

Stretch out your hands to whoever will hear

Take back your life and say what has been unsaid:

Unbearable what has been done to me,

Violence and destruction is all around.

Weep until your indignation has been seen and heard

Xerox your traumatic memories until you feat them no more.

You refuse to succumb,

Zealously clinging to life.

Rage and Hope Christian Aid SPCK

Watching the news makes this prayer highly relevant.