

## Easter Offering Lent Reflection – Sunday 21 February 2016

**Title:** Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Written by Jill Baker.



**Bible Passage:** Lamentations 1:11-12

All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength. Look, O LORD, and see how worthless I have become.

**Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?** Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the LORD inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.

**Reflection:** In this brief passage from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, our thoughts are focussed on a situation of desperation, powerlessness and grief, as the prophet mourns the destruction of Jerusalem in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC.

These same verses are sometimes used in Good Friday worship as we consider how Jesus was disregarded and



powerless in his crucifixion. For Adivasi peoples, the indigenous inhabitants of India and much of South Asia, there is a sense of identification with these narratives of worthlessness and oppression. Their agricultural, survival lifestyle may be threatened by increasing development and their age-old practices ignored and passed over as others make decisions and legislate without consultation.

Imagine yourself for a few moments as an Adivasi woman or man, someone whose family and culture go back thousands of years in your community, but someone who is regarded as almost sub-human, having no voice, no power, no justice. Think about a time in your life when you have felt overlooked, unappreciated, undervalued... perhaps a promotion passed you by unjustly; perhaps your sacrificial caring for others in the home or community went unnoticed; perhaps you have never been thanked for your ongoing service at church... Now try to adjust the scale of your feelings to grasp the utter disenfranchisement experienced by Adivasi people in many

lands... In all our thinking about human rights, sometimes, sadly, it remains true that those with the quieter voices are not heard, or not even considered to have a voice. In our prayer and action for justice we commit ourselves to speaking up and not “passing by”.

**Hymn reference:** StF 278 v2

O look on him, as you pass by; the wounded Prince of Life and peace!

Come, sinners, see your Maker die, and say, was ever grief like his?

Come, feel with me his blood applied: my Lord, my Love is crucified.

**Praying with the Church of North India - Adivasi voice:** We are alienated from our culture. We are displaced from our land. We are removed from our rivers. We are exposed to the heat of uncertainty from the cool shade of the forests. We ask what does the Lord require of us?

**We respond:** We too ask, “What does the Lord require of us?” Humble and humbled God, open our eyes to hear voices which have been silenced, open our ears to notice those who are unnoticed and fill our hearts with courage to challenge injustice, that your Kingdom may come. In the name of Christ, Amen.

These Lent reflections are written to link with the 2016 Easter Offering Dedication Service, used by most circuits in the Methodist Church in Britain during the weeks following Easter. Orders of service and other resources can be found at [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)