

Calling A Thorn, A Thorn

(inspired after a presentation by Archbishop Elias Chacour)

a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 choking to death the seeds of the sower
 seeds of just-peace
 destruction through the great removal in '48

a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 choking to death the seeds of the sower
 seeds of restorative justice
 oppression through the six-day war in '67

ongoing occupation through neglect of international laws
 ongoing oppression through neglect of international agreements
 a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 choking to death the seeds of equality

ongoing repression through refusal to abide by UN resolutions
 ongoing humiliation and harassment through checkpoints
 a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 choking to death the seeds of forgiveness

ongoing limitations and isolation through concrete walls
 ongoing encroachment of land through settlements
 a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 choking to death the seeds of redistributive justice

apartheid by any name is still apartheid
 racism by any name is still racism
 injustice by any name is still injustice
 supremacy by any name is still supremacy

a rose by any name is still a rose
 a thorn by any name is still a thorn
 i pray that this thorn is the stem of a rose
 sprouting out of the seeds of reconciliation and transformation

Psalms 130

(inspired after a concert by the Bethlehem Bible College Choir)

out of the depths I cry to you, o Lord
the depths of lost land and freedom
the depths of lost dignity and identity
the depths of discrimination and incarceration

can you hear me now, Lord!

when will your ears be attentive?
attentive to the pain of ethnic cleansing
attentive to the suffering of annihilation
attentive to the deafening silence of the world

can you feel me now, Lord!

are you keeping records, Lord?
of all the deaths caused by military action
of all the displacements caused by occupation
of all the scatterings due to emigration

can you see me now, Lord!

if i wait for you, Lord, will my strength be renewed to resist
if i wait for you, Lord, will my weariness be overcome by just-peace
my soul waits for the arrival of Allah's steadfast love
my soul waits for the arrival of Allah's redemptive power

are you coming now, Lord!

Psalm 91

(inspired after a visit with the staff from the
Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center)

**Surrounded by bulldozers and threatened by demolitions
We long to live in the shelter of the Most High
Living in the shadows of concrete walls, tunnels and bypasses
We desire to abide in the shadow of the Almighty**

**In Hebron and Bethlehem, will you be my refuge?
In Jericho and East Jerusalem, will you be my fortress?
Can I trust you arms to fend off all harm?
Can I be confident of your protection against disaster?**

**As the "forgotten faithful" in the land of Jesus
As descendents of the first disciples and apostles
Will you inform your angels concerning our plight of injustice
Will you command your angels to guard us from evil**

**As "living stones" can we walk unharmed among the roars of Zionism
As "living stones" can we walk a path without the bites of Palestina-phobia
Whether in Bethlehem or Nazareth, we are surrounded by lions and serpents
We need your angels to guard and guide us**

**In the midst of hostility, we love and call on your name, Lord
In the midst of animosity, we worship and serve you, Lord
As followers of Jesus in the land of Jesus, we remain faithful
Show us protection! Show us salvation! Show us liberation!**