

Thought for the day – De Profundis

Although the sun is shining (most of the time) and even when the rain comes, we celebrate it for the sake of our gardens; even though many of us have the technology to keep in touch with our loved ones yet all these things cannot replace the sense of community we have lost, and the very real sense of touching another person that those who live alone cannot have.

Read Psalm 130, a song of ascents, once sung by worshippers going up to Jerusalem. That particular journey could be a long and difficult one, even dangerous. Even life-threatening - we all know the story of the “Good Samaritan”. The psalm is brief enough to include in its entirety.

Psalm 130 New International Version (NIV)

A song of ascents.

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;

² Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

³ If you, LORD, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

⁶ I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷ Israel, put your hope in the LORD,
for with the LORD is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

⁸ He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

The psalm is called the De Profundus because of the opening words in Latin (“out of the depths”). It brings to mind many other calls to help to God, including the old spiritual: Kum by ya (Come by here [to me]).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1w3Lm_gu-ZY

Let us pray as we listen to the words of the old hymn

Lord, many of us are lonely. Many of us are struggling with the isolation. Even where we have family members around, there are those that we miss, whether family members or friends. There are those that we so much want to hold and to hug – and we can't. Out of the very depths Lord, we cry to you.

Oh Lord, Kum by ya.

We know you see our tears, you sympathise in our weakness (Hebrew 4.15). We know that you love us, to death and beyond, that our very name is written on the palm of your hand (Isaiah 49.16). We know that we feel alone and lonely and far from You, it is not you, Lord, who has moved. And yet, we struggle to find our way back to that close relationship with You, and so we pray from the very depths.

Oh Lord, Kum by ya.

We pray for those we know who are sick; for those we know who care for the sick; for those who care for the elderly in care homes. For all who now find that an ordinary job has become a daily act of heroism, we pray.

Oh Lord, Kum by ya.

We feel overwhelmed by the daily news. We cannot bear to watch or listen any more but feel we must, simultaneously drawn in and appalled by the daily rising death toll both at home and abroad. And we, along with all the world ask the question: How long, O Lord? How long will things be like this?

Oh Lord, Kum by ya.

We don't know the answer. The only answer we can hear, if we will open our minds and hearts to hear it, is the gentle whisper of your love, the voice that promises: *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* (Matthew 28.20).

We thank you for your everlasting love. We pray for ourselves and for others, for the faith to carry on, for the strength to deal with new and unwelcome situations of working from home, or of furlough or redundancy, or not being able to go out of the house at all. We praise you from the depths and we give you thanks that you are our God (always) and that we are your people and though we don't understand what's going on in this strange world we find ourselves in, yet we will trust in You.

Bless us, and keep us, we pray.

Amen.