

A Prayer of Lament and Grief in the Face of Violence in the Middle East

Praying for Peace and Justice on August 18, 2024

Creator God, we grieve this morning for the volcanoes of rage and hatred erupting around your earth.

Saddened God, we grieve this morning for the teenagers and youth slaughtered by armed militants at an outdoor music festival.

Merciful God, we grieve this morning for the scared babies, mothers and grandmothers abducted into strange and terrifying places and awaiting an unknown future.

Weeping God, we grieve this morning for the patients and families who sought healing and comfort in a hospital, only to find more death, maiming and terror.

Searching God, we grieve for those trying to flee only to discover that their world offers no place of safety.

Healing God, we grieve this morning for those thousands, wounded or robbed of limbs, who have little hope of finding medical care.

Builder God, we grieve this morning for all those whose homes, schools, shops, businesses and houses of worship have been reduced to rubble.

Fuming God, we grieve this morning for the adoration of revenge, and for the self-destructive thinking that assumes

one act of horror and violence must be followed by yet another, even more violent and horrible.

Loving God, we grieve this morning for entire populations, deprived of life-giving water and food.

Creative God, we grieve this morning for people living under years of oppression, and for people whose overwhelming fears convince them that oppressing others is their only choice.

Inclusive God, we grieve this morning for the upsurges in antisemitism, anti-Muslimism and anti-other-isms that are growing in our own country.

Sorrowful God, we grieve this morning for our own country's complicity and for those killed by bombs, missiles and airplanes made here in the U.S. We grieve for those murdered in our name.

Justice-proclaiming God. All your beloved people, deserve to live lives without fear of violence. Give us the strength, courage, perseverance, and faith to recognize that we do have the power to break from our silence and apathy. Give us the power, to stand up and cry out for love, de-escalation and peace. No more violence. Not in your name. Not in my name. Never again. For anyone, anywhere.

Background

This morning, I will be offering a prayer of lament, the exact same Peace and Justice prayer I offered ten months ago on October 22, 2023. Since then, the leaders of Israel, Hamas and the U.S. have continued to prioritize war, armaments, destruction and death and have absolutely failed in their responsibilities to promote peace. Their callous inaction means that the stomach-wrenching horrors of the past 10 months have only broadened and deepened.

Having not changed a single word; I invite you to again join

me in this prayer of lament.