

Oxford Three Faiths Encounter



God, Creation and Us: From Theology to Action Conference Transcription

Thursday 24th March 2022

Act of Lamentation

**With Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, Canon Dr Charlotte Bannister-Parker, and
Kamran Shezad**

This is a meditation written by for the afternoon of Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement, where we spend the whole day fasting and asking for forgiveness. And it really was written for this time of day; the middle of the afternoon. Now is the still time of day, gently the world has receded from us. We know it will return, but for the moment it hangs on the horizon of time, on the rim of our mind. The world has somehow receded from us, its successes and failures, its pomp and its pride. We are released from the outer show of things. Now is the empty time between two worlds when the past has faded and the future has yet no force. When we are free to be alone with our thoughts to journey into our souls and meet our God. Now is the time for truth to meet it untraveled; by hope or fear, by gain or loss.

The stillness of this hour of lament and penitence touches our souls and in its quietness, we can admit all that we never dared. We can confess in truth even to those we love. Oh God of truth, we rely on you to lead us into truth. And in a moment will be the time to journey forward; not just into our daily lives but also to touch the eternal life. The mighty life from which we come, the hidden life to which we go, the gentle life, and the environment which feeds our body, mind and soul, which leads us in sin and sacrifice and the offerings of our hearts to peace and goodness and to be at one with God. May God bless us and keep us, may God show us God's face and enlighten us, may God turn God's face towards us and give us this peace. Amen.

Charlotte

Thank you Michael, that was really beautiful contribution. I would like to share with you two prayers this morning. The first comes from a community that lives in the coastal areas of Ireland and are very close and living in that 'thin place' between heaven and earth that I spoke about earlier. And the second is a prayer of shelter and shadow which I find as a deeply insightful way means of talking about two sides of what we are grappling with. It is in

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the shelter and shadow of each other that people live. We know that sometimes we are alone and that other times we are in community. Sometimes we are in shadow and sometimes we are surrounded by shelter.

Sometimes we feel like exiles in our land and in our languages and in our bodies. And sometimes we feel surrounded by welcome. As we seek to be human together may we share the things that do not fade; generosity, truth telling, silence, respect, and love. And may the power we share be full of good for all. We honour God, the source of this rich life, and we honour each other, story-filled and lovely. We honour each other's troubles, stories, faith, and we look to God for forgiveness. Whether in our shadow or our shelter, may we live fully with each other. Amen.

[Kamran's contribution here]

Charlotte

Thank you Kamran, for sharing that with us. So that ends our Acts of Lamentations' penitence, and we hope that you go forth now to have a rest and some tea, and maybe walk in the garden in the sunshine, before we reconvene at 4.30pm back here for our Youth Panel.