

Distress Gnaws at the Heart

The deportees cried to you in their distress
and the prophets consoled them
for so many agonizing years,
foretelling to them a glorious Jerusalem
which would gather them into unending happiness.

I too, I cry to God in distress,
torn away from my sun, my land, my family,
a foreigner in a country of rich people,
unsuited for the work and for the people around me.

By what road will I go home to Jerusalem?
Which of my own kind will be waiting for me in the doorway?

I too, I cry to God in my distress, an
anonymous number in this world
with no weight in the decisions of the mighty,
alienated from myself, from my future.

By what road will I go home to Jerusalem?
Who will write me down as a worthy and free citizen?

I too, I cry to God in my distress,
who am paying a terrible price for existence,
skin torn by barbed wire,
the future torn by tortures.

By what road will I go home to Jerusalem?
Who could give his life for more peace and more love?

I too, I cry to God in my distress
thrown into a faceless world,
tossed about and scattered, worried and ignorant
day after day looking for somewhere else.

By what road will I go home to Jerusalem?
Who will restore the right?

Rejected by his own, misunderstood by those near him,
abandoned by God,
Jesus himself cried out to God in his distress,
dreaming of a Jerusalem
where he would gather together his brothers,
of a road where all mankind would follow in his footsteps.

Give us, Lord, a new heart
inspire within us a magnanimous Spirit
and the Jerusalem your Son is building will be that much more beautiful
since its stones will have been verified by the test of faithfulness and
sculpted in the fire of love.

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