WEEP, BUT THE CROSS CHANGES EVERYTHING

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In the cross of Jesus Christ the anguished, angry cries of the sufferers of all the ages find a response...
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This quote from David Smith's wonderful Stumbling Towards Zion strikes me as being very apposite for our current situation.

> *In the letter Paul had written to the Romans he had dealt at length with the reality of suffering and loss. He depicted the entire creation as groaning under the burden of its abuse and exploitation, and then described the believer's experience as one which involved the sharing of such agonies and "groaning inwardly" as a result of the dissonance between what has been promised by the gospel and the reality of facing "death all day long" (Rom.8:20-23, 36). The description of Christians "groaning inwardly" sounds remarkably like the prayers of lament that we have discussed earlier in this book, and it suggests once again that the tradition of honest spirituality bequeathed to us by the Hebrew Bible is a precious gift to be received with thankfulness by Christians in a world still tragically broken. Elsewhere, Paul confesses that the extreme hardships he faced resulted in "great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure" (2 Cor. 1:8). In the light of his subsequent experience, as we have just described this he may well have come to feel that the burden of suffering and disappointement was to grow to even greater proportions by the end of his life.*
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> *However, something had changed with the crucifixion of Jesus, so while not in any way minimizing the reality of the depth of Christian suffering, Paul can remind the Romans that the death and resurrection of Jesus has moved us to a place beyond Job where we can say, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). The claim that "God is for us" moves far beyond a conventional theological assertion in that the relationship between God and the suffering world has been totally transformed by the cross. God is "for us" in the sense that he has known the suffering of this world, reaching down to the very deepest depths of humiliation, pain and loneliness, so displaying a love from which nothing in "all creation" can separate us (8:39)! In the cross of Jesus Christ the anguished, angry cries of the sufferers of all the ages find a response...*
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> *p.71, 72*