



from Garth...

Do Unto Others...

I was watching the TV programme 'Sitting in Limbo' the other day, a programme based on the story of Anthony Bryan, one of the Windrush community. I actually found it became overwhelming. I even popped out of the room a couple of times, I found it so shocking, yet so well done.

I needed to go for a walk afterwards as I was angry. What is wrong in our country? **The cruelty and abuse of the "hostile environment" is deeply shocking on every level. It rejects our humanity, it rejects the responsibility of care for others, it rejects any sense of a decent spirituality, it rejects human rights.** Who are those who allowed this brutal injustice to happen? What are their values? What do they believe in?

Yesterday on a news programme two Windrush people were talking about the way they had been treated. In one case after an extremely long period of time she had received some compensation, but they had both gone through desperate times, and one still had not had his compensation. **He then turned to the camera and said, "All I say is do unto others as you would have them do to you."**

And I thought, there is no better comment than that. If we could live by that standard, we would find a just and hopeful way forward - and those words could influence our thoughts and deeds, whether about Windrush, or Grenfell, or the ongoing struggle for racial justice and equality for all.

Here's a song from the Moonrise album that reminds us to "Do unto others (as you'd have them do to you)". Produced by Paul Pilot - and he does the very nice guitar solo!

"Teach us to love your ways - you are the God of the poor..."

Teach us to love the ones whom life and the world push down..."

To hear Garth's song *Do Unto Others* click [here](#)

Still Feeling Pain - Neville Lawrence



Stephen Lawrence

In a recent interview in The Guardian (10th June 2020), Neville Lawrence said, "Black people are still treated as second class citizens in Britain with police breaking promises to reform made two decades ago..."

In 1993 Stephen Lawrence (Neville's son) was murdered in a racist attack in Eltham, south east London. Neville and his wife Doreen, now Lady Lawrence, spent years publicising police failings in the investigation, and won a public enquiry in 1999 which found errors were down to incompetence and "institutional racism".

Neville Lawrence said, "We should not be talking about it 21 years later. They have fallen way, way short, 21 years short."

Lawrence said the loss of his son and the police failings still haunt his life, which is split between London and Jamaica where he was born and where

Stephen's body was buried.

"I can't forget because it's my life, this I've been going through for 27 years," he said, "we're all still feeling pain."

For me this brought back memories – I've only met Neville Lawrence once which was when Archbishop John Sentamu (then Bishop of Stepney) asked me to join him with Doreen and Neville Lawrence and some friends, at the place where Stephen had been killed. A plaque on the pavement about Stephen had been desecrated and they had renewed it, and this was a moment to bless it, to remember and to pray. I was asked to sing the song I'd written called **"You Are Loved (Stephen Lawrence)"**.



Denise Ogbeide, who sings with Garth on 'You Are Loved (Stephen Lawrence)'

Many years later Doreen chose this as one of her songs on Desert Island Discs. The song is on the "Stronger than the storm" album recorded in Kings Heath

Birmingham and singer Denise Ogbeide joins me on vocals.
You Are Loved, Stephen Lawrence is on [YouTube here](#)

Inclusivity and Equality

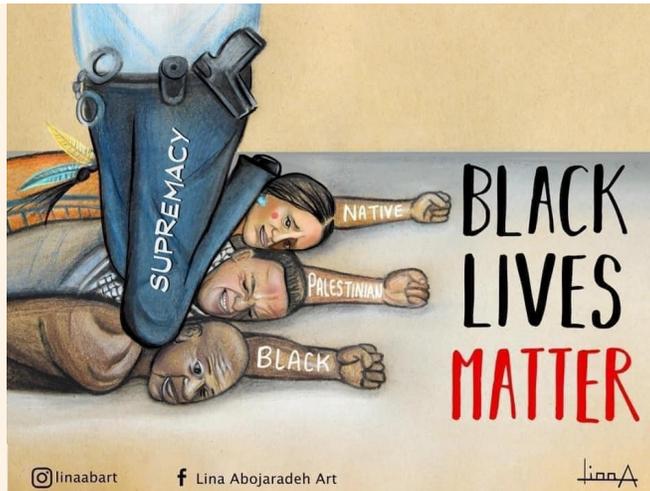
Early on in lockdown I quoted some words from Pope Francis, Mitri Raheb – Lutheran Pastor and theologian from Bethlehem, and also Zoughbi Zoughbi – Amos partner and Director of the Wi'am, the Palestinian Conflict Transformation Centre, and also from Bethlehem. What was interesting was that all three were seeing this as a moment for everyone to pull together. The Pope said that we are all on the same boat and we need to row together and to comfort each other. Mitri stressed that Coronavirus has shown us we are all in this together, there is no difference between different people, “we are all equal and one big village, and walls don’t work”. Zoughbi said, “The virus proves we are all one, equally threatened by Coronavirus... We must live together in peace working together for everyone’s welfare – Israeli and Palestinian – Jews, Muslims and Christians. There is no security in Israel unless there is also security in Palestine. **The new name of the game is inclusivity and equality.**”

I had perhaps naively hoped that we would find this to be a time of reconciliation between nations and between communities. But we still find that many leaders around the world are oppressing their people or ratcheting up bad relationships with other countries. Let us pray that people see we are all in the same boat and start to row together, work together, and find equality and justice together.

It is important to remember Palestinians at this time when the world is facing up to issues of racism - this too for the Palestinians is a day-by-day ongoing situation. **This article by Amnesty International shows the link between the Israeli forces who are training police forces in the States, with the brutal control methods which led to the death of George Floyd; Israeli forces are involved in training US police forces in military techniques.**



Israeli soldiers controlling an unarmed Palestinian - a technique used daily



Jewish Voice For Peace - Deadly Exchange

This report by Jewish Voice For Peace, called **Deadly Exchange** was released in 2018 - raising the issue of the Israeli training of US police.

This came from the **Sabeel Wave of Prayer, June 2nd 2020**

"Israeli police have shot and killed an unarmed Palestinian near the Old City in occupied East Jerusalem. The slain man, 32 year old lyad el-Hallak, attended and worked at a school for people with special needs in the Old City, close to the spot where he was shot on Saturday morning. el-Hallak who is a person of disability was heading to the school when he was shot by several bullets and he was left on the ground bleeding for a while until he died."

Prayer

"Dear Lord, we remember the family of lyad as they grieve for the loss of their son. We pray that the Israeli soldiers and their commanders are held accountable for their crimes. Bless us O God with courage and determination to continue to speak truth to power and may our words never abandon the marginalised.

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer."



Click here for Garth's song 'Humans Too'

Humans Too

I've got some news, may be a surprise
It's a basic truth I've come to recognise
May come as a shock, it's only known to a few
But Palestinians are humans too.

If you share this secret, if you say it loud
You're gonna be criticised without any doubt
Because they're hated and despised and denied their rights
But strangely they're precious in God's own eyes.

Palestinians are humans too...

The Palestinians have carried this burden for a long time - have a look at Rashid Khalidi's new book *The Hundred Years War on Palestine*

Stop Annexation Now

"The Israeli government has said it intends to annex large swathes of Palestinian land in the West Bank starting in July. This would be the culmination of years of appropriation of land – through the forced displacement of Palestinians, settlement and the annexation of East Jerusalem. Annexation, illegal under international law, is the forcible and unilateral acquisition of territory over which it has no recognised sovereignty and to make it an integral part of Israel."

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign's letter [Speak Out to Stop Annexation Now](#), which you can access [here](#), outlines **four ways to take action** – have a look at that and you will notice that amongst the signatories is Amos Trust, and that I have signed as well, along with many, many others. Do add your voices to this. And under the calls for action is one to write to your MP, and a template letter is provided for that.

*The forces of darkness can't extinguish the flame
Of the freedom in your eyes and the love you retain
These are more powerful than the weapons of war
With their terror and lies - but you bring something more*

*All across Palestine they've had enough
Of killing and wounding from Israeli guns
They want no more occupation, no more siege
No more brutality, they just want peace*

*I will survive, I will survive
My name is Palestine and I will survive
I will remain, I will remain
My name is Palestine and I will remain*

[Click here for Garth's song My Name Is Palestine](#)

Prayer - Make a difference in the world



**May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers,
Half-truths, superficial relationships,
So that you will live deep within your heart.**

**May God bless you with anger at injustice,
Oppression and exploitation of people,
So that you will work for justice, equity and peace.**

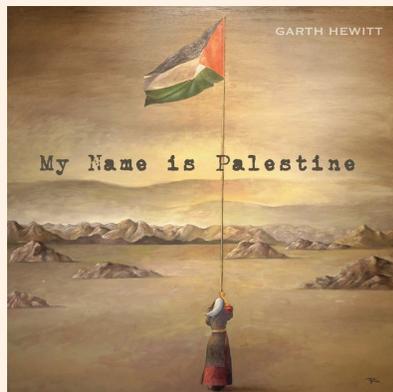
**May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain,
Rejection, starvation and war,
So that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and change their pain
to joy.**

And may God bless you with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world,
So that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

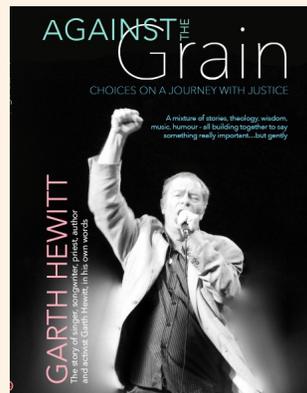
From 'A World of Blessing' edited by Geoffrey Duncan

Garth Hewitt

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click here to buy Garth's CD 'My Name Is Palestine'



click here for your copy of Garth's memoir 'Against the Grain'



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