

**Hiroshima Day/World Peace Day:
A Lament Rhythms of Grace 2017.
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Background

In September 1939 Britain and France declared war on Germany following its invasion of Poland. And so began WW2. By 1945 nearly every country in the world was involved on one side or the other and scientists on the American Manhattan Project had produced two different types of the world's first atomic bomb, code-named *Fat Man* and *Little Boy*.

While plans for the invasion of Japan were going ahead, preparations were also being made for the use of the atomic bomb on Japan.

Hiroshima was chosen as the primary target since it had remained largely untouched by bombing raids, and the bomb's effects could be clearly measured.

While President Truman had hoped for a purely military target, some advisers believed that bombing an urban area might break the fighting will of the Japanese people.

Visual bombing, rather than radar, would be used so that photographs of the damage could be taken. Since Hiroshima had not been seriously harmed by bombing raids, these photographs could present a clear picture of the bomb's damage.

Before *Little Boy* was dropped on Hiroshima, a number of scientists tried to stop its use. 88 signatures on a petition indicated only 15 percent of scientists involved wanted the bomb used "in the most effective military manner." The petition was sat on by senior project leadership and President Truman never saw it. At 8.15am on August 6, 1945, a modified American B-29 Superfortress bomber named the *Enola Gay*, after the pilot's mother, exploded *Little Boy* over the city of Hiroshima.

The burst temperature was estimated to reach over a million degrees Celsius, which ignited the surrounding air, forming a fireball some 250m in diameter. Eyewitnesses more than 10km away said its brightness exceeded the sun tenfold.

Over two-thirds of Hiroshima's buildings were demolished. The hundreds of fires, ignited by the thermal pulse, combined to

produce a firestorm that incinerated everything within 2km of ground zero.

Between 80 and 140,000 people were instantly incinerated and 100 000 more seriously injured.

To the crew of the Enola Gay, Hiroshima had disappeared under a thick, churning foam of flames and smoke. The co-pilot, Captain Robert Lewis, commented, "My God, what have we done?"

About 30 minutes after the explosion, a heavy rain began falling on the city. This "black rain" was full of dirt, dust, soot and highly radioactive particles that were sucked up into the air at the time of the explosion. It caused contamination even in areas that were remote from the explosion.

The survivors, known as hibakusha, sought relief from their injuries. However, 90 percent of all medical personnel were killed or disabled in the blast, and the remaining medical supplies quickly ran out.

Survivors spoke of fingers catching on fire and setting fire to bodies.

Three days later a second atomic bomb was exploded over the city of Nagasaki, Japan.

U.S. airman Matthew McGunigle photographed the Hiroshima blast. After the war, he entered a monastery and took a vow of silence.

[PAUSE]

Lament

Our God, we lament the potential for evil and self-centred decision-making that is in our hearts.

We know we are made in your image, but we struggle to be made more and more into your likeness.

Speak to us each day when we make choices that reflect evil and injustice rather than Christ-likeness.

Make us aware of the motives and feelings behind our words and actions;

So that day by day our hearts and passions and desires reflect more and more your character.

Jesus said:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said:

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Jesus said:

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Jesus said:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Jesus said:

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Jesus said:

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Jesus said:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Jesus said:

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said:

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Jesus said.

Song: O Tender God have mercy.