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Nearer than we think

Some time ago, a friend was telling me about a painful time in her history when she had suffered a bereavement and everything seemed to be going wrong.



She couldn't think clearly and her mind was filled with grief and anger because she had prayed and yet felt that her prayers had been ignored.

As she strode up and down the seafront, anguished and confused, she felt as though God was completely absent and had abandoned her utterly.

"How could You do this? I thought You loved us!" she complained, but felt as though her cries bounced off the uncaring sky.

As she was describing this painful time, I remembered the poem 'Footprints' (in which someone tells about a dream in which he sees scenes from his life in which there are two sets of footprints in the sand. He wonders why, at the most difficult times in his life, there is only one set of prints and at first he thinks that, when he most needed help, God abandoned him. Then he realises that during those times the Lord was actually carrying him).

Thinking about this, another picture came into my head. I imagined a little baby in one of those slings that parents wear on their front. In this picture a little baby boy was riding in a sling, facing forwards so he could see where he was going. However, he was feeling very anxious, as though he were all alone, looking out on the big confusing world. He was thinking 'Daddy's disappeared, where's my Daddy gone?' But all the time his Daddy, carrying him in the sling, couldn't have been any closer. When we can't find God, is he nearer than we think?