



# BEACON 27TH MARCH 2020

## “WHY DIDN'T GOD HEAL GRANDAD?”

PSALM 88 : 1-18

“O Lord, God of my salvation, I cry out to you by day. I come to you at night.  
Now hear my prayer; listen to my cry.

For my life is full of troubles, and death draws near.

I am as good as dead, like a strong man with no strength left.

They have left me among the dead, and I lie like a corpse in a grave.

I am forgotten, cut off from your care.

You have thrown me into the lowest pit, into the darkest depths.

Your anger weighs me down; with wave after wave you have engulfed me.

Interlude

You have driven my friends away by making me repulsive to them.

I am in a trap with no way of escape. My eyes are blinded by my tears.

Each day I beg for your help, O Lord; I lift my hands to you for mercy.

Are your wonderful deeds of any use to the dead? Do the dead rise up and praise you?

Can those in the grave declare your unfailing love? Can they proclaim your faithfulness in the place of destruction? Can the darkness speak of your wonderful deeds? Can anyone in the land of forgetfulness talk about your righteousness?

O Lord, I cry out to you. I will keep on pleading day by day.

O Lord, why do you reject me? Why do you turn your face from me?

I have been sick and close to death since my youth. I stand helpless and desperate before your terrors. Your fierce anger has overwhelmed me. Your terrors have paralyzed me. They swirl around me like floodwaters all day long. They have engulfed me completely. You have taken away my companions and loved ones. Darkness is my closest friend."

I recently read an article in a magazine, entitled: "Why Didn't God Heal Grandad?" The writer, who was a church pastor, was addressing the question of why is it that God doesn't always answer prayer for healing? He was especially quizzical about his grandfather who had died five years earlier from cancer, despite much prayer for his healing.

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## "O Lord; I lift my hands to you for mercy"

He also spoke of other people in his family and church who had died of sickness, despite prayer. But he also mentioned cases of healing, and last-minute divine interventions. So, there is some hopefulness here!

The writer of the above-mentioned article admitted that he is unable to reconcile the tension between Scriptural promises of healing, and the fact that not everyone gets healed in answer to prayer.

Personally, I've struggled with James 5: 14 -15 since a friend died of bone cancer, even though his church held mass prayer meetings for him. I was rocked by his death. But his wife later shared with me that she felt the Lord had healed him – by taking him. I hadn't considered that until then.

Psalm 88 was obviously written by someone who was going through great suffering and distress. Yet it is noticeable that despite this he was still talking to God.

This Psalm was written, I believe, to encourage those of us who at times wonder where God has gone when we are going through bad times. Korah apparently continued to believe that God was listening. And Job expressed absolute trust in

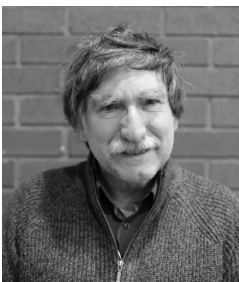
God even if it came to God killing him! And he would continue his defence before God. (Job 13:15).

So, in our present coronavirus situation, we don't know what else will develop, and what hardship it might involve. But we can still talk to God – still have faith that He will bring us through into His presence. Which is why Paul wrote in Romans 8: 15 – 19 that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

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**“God might kill me, but I have no other hope”**

I think this is the promise we must hold onto in these days of national trouble, and in times of personal trouble too.



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