

Unresolved Lament

Sons of Korah · Heman the Ezrahite · Book III

"A Song. A Psalm by the sons of Korah. For the Chief Musician. To the tune of "The Suffering of Affliction." A contemplation by Heman, the Ezrahite."

IN ONE SENTENCE

*he darkest lament: a suffering man cries to God day and night from the pit, and the psalm ends without relief.***Remember it:** Eighty-eight: from the deepest pit, keep praying, even before the light comes.

MEMORY VERSE

But to you, Yahweh, I have cried. In the morning, my prayer comes before you.

Psalm 88:13 · World English Bible

HEBREW WORD

בֹּר

"pit" · verse 4

In the Psalms: seven times, in 6 psalms

בֹּר is a dug pit, a cistern or well cut into rock. Joseph was thrown into one and Jeremiah was lowered into one, and the word also pictures the grave. This sufferer feels already counted among those going down. Yet he keeps praying to the God of his salvation from the bottom of it.

HOW THE PSALM MOVES

- 1–9** Crying day and night from the pit near death.
- 10–12** Do the dead praise you? Questions from the grave.
- 13–18** Still praying each morning, ending in darkness without relief.

MY NOTES

**Listen.** Hear Psalm 88 sung in the **Psalm Song** app, or free at ispress.de/psalms/88.**Cantillated.** Sung: chanted back and forth between a leader and the people.

Crying Out in Distress

Waiting on God

FILL IN THE BLANKS

The _____ lament: a suffering man cries to God day and _____ from the pit, and the psalm ends without _____ .

CHECK YOURSELF

1. How does the psalmist address God in verse 1?

☐ (A) God of Armies

☐ (B) The God of my salvation

☐ (C) Shepherd of Israel

☐ (D) King of glory

2. When does his prayer come before God?

☐ (A) In the evening

☐ (B) At noon

☐ (C) In the morning

☐ (D) On the Sabbath

3. What has God put far from him?

☐ (A) Lover and friend

☐ (B) His enemies

☐ (C) His wealth

☐ (D) His home

TALK IT OVER

1. What words and pictures show how dark the psalmist's situation is?

2. Why might God include a prayer with no happy ending in his Word?

3. How can this psalm help you pray, or sit with someone, in long seasons of suffering?

IN YOUR OWN WORDS: WHAT DOES PSALM 88 TEACH?

☐ I listened to the song

☐ I can say what it teaches

☐ I can say verse 13 by heart

☐ I know the picture word

Answers: Blanks: darkest · night · relief · Check yourself: 1. B (v. 1) · 2. C (v. 13) · 3. A (v. 18)