

10/21/2018 - Slides

Message Title: Longing for Shalom

Passage: Psalm 88

Text: ESV (Please include the superscript and the keep the line breaks – I know it'll make more slides, but I'd like us all to feel the poetry as best we can).

**A Song. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. To the choirmaster:  
according to *Mahalath Leannoth*. A *Maskil* of Heman the Ezrahite.**

**88** O LORD, God of my salvation,  
I cry out day and night before you.

<sup>2</sup> Let my prayer come before you;  
incline your ear to my cry!

<sup>3</sup> For my soul is full of troubles,  
and my life draws near to Sheol.

<sup>4</sup> I am counted among those who go down to the pit;  
I am a man who has no strength,

<sup>5</sup> like one set loose among the dead,  
like the slain that lie in the grave,  
like those whom you remember no more,  
for they are cut off from your hand.

<sup>6</sup> You have put me in the depths of the pit,  
in the regions dark and deep.

<sup>7</sup> Your wrath lies heavy upon me,  
and you overwhelm me with all your waves. *Selah*

<sup>8</sup> You have caused my companions to shun me;  
you have made me a horror to them.

I am shut in so that I cannot escape;  
<sup>9</sup> my eye grows dim through sorrow.  
Every day I call upon you, O LORD;  
I spread out my hands to you.

<sup>10</sup> Do you work wonders for the dead?  
Do the departed rise up to praise you? *Selah*

<sup>11</sup> Is your [lovingkindness] declared in the grave,  
or your faithfulness in Abaddon?

<sup>12</sup> Are your wonders known in the darkness,  
or your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

- <sup>13</sup> But I, O LORD, cry to you;  
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
- <sup>14</sup> O LORD, why do you cast my soul away?  
Why do you hide your face from me?
- <sup>15</sup> Afflicted and close to death from my youth up,  
I suffer your terrors; I am helpless.
- <sup>16</sup> Your wrath has swept over me;  
Your dreadful assaults destroy me.
- <sup>17</sup> They surround me like a flood all day long;  
They close in on me together.
- <sup>18</sup> You have caused my beloved and my friend to shun me;  
[darkness has become my only companions].

Sermon

Slide 1

Where we're going...

[Vatican Museum Spiral Staircase.jpg]

Slide 2

Karen Dabaghian in *Travelogue of the Interior* notes that story pulls hearers into the unfolding drama of knowing God, but poetry causes us to be still, to be startled by the word plays, and to take the time to reflect on what is said.

[Travelogue of the Interior – Cover Pic.jpg]

Slide 3

“Lament is a liturgical response to the reality of suffering and engages God in the context of pain and trouble. The hope of lament is that God would respond to human suffering that is wholeheartedly communicated through lament” (Soong-Chan Rah, *Prophetic Lament*, p. 21).

Slide 4

“Lament is the act of pouring out in thoughtfully crafted, brutally honest speech all the accusatory, self-serving, pain-drenched thoughts and emotions that fester in the deepest recesses of my soul when God hasn't come through for me in the way I believe He is supposed to” (Karen Dabaghian, *Travelogue of the Interior*, p. 56).

Slide 5

"We cannot grieve deeply, and, therefore, avail ourselves of God's healing touch, until we are willing to say what we really believe deep down in the pit of our souls where the pain is most acute: 'You did this to me! You could have prevented it, but You didn't!' Even, 'You, God, caused my pain' " (Dabaghian, p. 59).

Slide 6 (repeat of Scripture reading to show superscript)

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Slide 7

Psalm 88

Heman's 1) prayer for help, his 2) expression of his own experience, and his 3) accusation of God for God's apparent inaction in his life

Heman reveals belief and faith that even though he *feels* that God is the problem, he *knows* that God is ultimately the only solution

Heman repeatedly directs his cry (and our attention) to the Triune God (LORD = *YHWH*, God = *Elohim*, Salvation = *Yeshu'a*)

Slide 8 (divide the following into as many slides as needed, with "God is..." at the top of each slide – my plan is to flow the whole content in a couple sentences, so my intent for these slides is to assist in the questions for small groups)

God is...

- v.1 – Provider of salvation
- v.2 – Receiver of prayer
- v.6 – Author of Heman's pain
- v.8 – Remover of acquaintances (also v.18)

(Slide 9)

God is...

- v.10 – Doer of wonders
- v.10 – Receiver of praise
- v.11 – Revealer of lovingkindness (ESV: steadfast love)
- v.11 – Revealer of faithfulness

(Slide 10)

God is...

- v.12 – Possessor of righteousness

- v.14 – Rejecter
- v.14 – Distant
- v. 15 – Possessor of burning anger
- v. 15 – Giver of terrors

Slide 11

“... raw honesty is the threshold of intimacy with God. There is nothing quite like bearing your bloodied soul to God and experiencing in that very moment God’s embrace as God accepts all of you, including your bitterness and confusion, your grief and disappointment. In the moment of deepest lament, when you come face to face with your own naked humanity, that’s the moment you see how truly, widely, deeply God loves you. You see for yourself God’s *chesed* (lovingkindness).” (Dabaghian, p. 40)

Small Group Questions

1. There were several definitions of lament (in slides above). Which one stood out to you, and why?
2. Why should we care about the obvious fact that Psalm 88 was written by a real person who lived in a specific time and place?
3. What are some specific points from Psalm 88 that the author, Heman, directed or attention to?
4. What does the statement—“raw honesty is the threshold to intimacy with God”—mean? If God already knows everything already, why is it important for us to bare our souls to Him?
5. Why does lament matter?