



## What Are You Doing?

*The Songs of the Children of God*

October 25, 2026

### PSALM 88

A song, a psalm for the Korahites, for the lead player,  
on the mahalath, to sing out, a maskil for Heman the Ezrahite.

LoRD, God of **my rescue**,  
by day I cried out,  
by night, **in Your presence**.  
May my prayer come **before You**.  
**Incline Your ear** to my song.  
For I am sated with evils  
and my life **reached the brink of Sheol**.  
I was counted among those who **go down to the Pit**.  
I became like a man without strength,  
**among the dead cast away**,  
like the slain, those who **lie in the grave**,  
**whom You no more recall**,  
and they are cut off by Your hand.  
**You put me in the nethermost Pit**,  
**in darkness, in the depths**.  
**Your wrath lay hard upon me**,  
**and all Your breakers You inflicted**.  
*Selah*  
**You distanced my friends from me**,  
**you made me disgusting to them**;  
**imprisoned**, I cannot get out.

My eyes ache from affliction.  
I called on You, LoRD, every day.  
I stretched out to You my palms.  
Will You do wonders for the dead?  
Will the shades arise and acclaim you?  
Will Your kindness be told in the grave,  
Your faithfulness in perdition?  
Will Your wonder be known in the darkness,  
Your bounty in the land of oblivion?  
As for me—to You, LoRD, I shouted,  
and in the morn my prayer would greet You.  
Why, LorD, do You abandon my life,  
do You hide Your face from me?  
Lowly am I and near death from my youth  
I have borne Your terrors, I am fearful.  
Over me Your rage has passed,  
Your horrors destroy me.  
They surround me like water all day long,  
they encircle me completely.  
You distanced lover and neighbor from me.  
My friends—utter darkness.

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### Reflections on Psalm 88

The OT conception of Sheol (pit, grave, depths, perdition, darkness, oblivion)

What is God doing when we are suffering?

The lazy conclusions: God is either uncaring or unable

God is sending us on a noble mission that will include suffering: Abraham, Moses, Jesus

God is sending unculpable suffering as a method of loving formation? Can't find an example

God is allowing natural consequences as a form of loving formation: see Hebrews 12:5–11

God is allowing unculpable suffering for purposes of loving formation: 1 Peter 4:12–16, Job

God is unwillingly allowing unculpable suffering according to His own rules: John the Baptist

God has suffered first (from before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8) in order to help us

God suffers with us: Jesus weeps (John 11:35); tears in the bottle (Psalm 56:8)

God has the Last Word: everything gets redeemed and swept up into a grander story: Rom 8:28