

# **THE LAMENT OF HEMAN**

*Prayer's Usefulness When Darkness Consumes*

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Psalm 88

**I. Christians Can Face Long-lasting Suffering**

**II. God is Not Put Off By Our Pain**

**III. Prayer Makes Our Weakness Useful**

## IV. The Amazing Way Jesus Changes Everything

*Discuss these questions with your  
Community Group*

1. In Psalm 88, we see a prayer that is brutally honest, confused over God's purposes in suffering, and grieved by the seemingly relational distance of God. Have you ever been in such a place before? How does this Psalm line up or not line up with your thinking about prayer (& what is acceptable to say in prayer)? How does Psalm 88 challenge or stretch your notions of what prayer is?
2. God works in our weakness through prayer and scripture. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Paul mentions four reasons/purposes for his suffering. What are they? How might these reasons instruct you in your times of trials? Scripture can lead us in prayer when we don't know how to pray. Read Colossians 1:9-14. Take some time and turn this into a prayer, being honest with God wherever you are at.
3. Not all darkness is equal. Some is the result of sin, some the result of obedience to God, and some still its origins hidden from our view. However, all suffering is ultimately a mental battle, and it skews our perspective for what God has done in our lives and what He will do. Now read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. What is Paul's perspective on his suffering? What hope does the gospel of Christ give to our suffering?
4. It is a common, and abhorrent, practice for people who are suffering to be blamed for their prolonged trials, or to be viewed as a drain by those around them. Psalm 88 shows us how relational abandonment multiplied Heman's grief. Read Psalm 34:18, 94:19. How ought we to respond to the suffering of others in their times of great distress?