



**On his
knees**

MUSEUM OF ART
Greche

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 1 Kings 8v54.

On Thursday 12th January 2023 my Dad died.

My Dad, who was 89 years old, was taken to hospital on the Monday afternoon, but discharged himself two days later as he was very agitated and uncomfortable being there; he just wanted to go home. I believe now, he knew he was dying and wanted to die at home rather than in hospital. I wonder what 'insight' you get in your final days and hours knowing that you only have a very short time left here on earth before passing into eternity?

Without going into all the details as to what happened during the week - to be honest it was very tough - I'll sum it up like this...

My wife Donna and I decided to stay over at Dad's house the night he came out of hospital, as he was very frightened; he actually said he was 'terrified', but didn't know what of. He was very anxious, in fact the word I would use to best describe what he was going through is 'tormented'.

My Dad was a hardened atheist and rejected God all his life. He lived in guilt, regret, disappointment, sadness, and fear for much of his life. My mother and sister had left him, and he also pushed me away too. He was a very difficult man, and wouldn't bend for anyone. Pride was his downfall.

My Dad and I had been estranged for over 25 years, so meeting him again, the day before he died, was a huge moment for me. Donna had looked after him for all these years, visiting him for 2-4 hours every day, and had really been a mediator between us. I looked after him from 'afar'. Most of you reading this won't actually understand what that means, and I'm not here to justify myself to anyone, God knows. It was a very sad situation.

When I walked into the room where Dad was, I saw a frail old man who was 89 years old, broken, and at the point of death. It hurt, and it hit me hard and deep. We spent hours sitting up with him, trying to talk to him. I told him I loved him at least four times, two of which 'penetrated', and hit home, as he looked at me with intensity.

He kept telling us that he was terrified, but didn't know why, or of what. He had no peace and was scared of the unknown, 'the future', as all atheists are, even though some of them try to cover it up. I urged him to call upon God to help him, save him, and give him peace. He responded with "*Don't start...!*"

Rather than even give God 'a try', he would rather suffer the torment and anguish of dying and entering eternity, not knowing that depending on 'how' he died, Heaven or Hell awaited him. He was 'hanging in the balance', and it was only his own freewill 'choice' that could decide his everlasting destination.

Over many years I had given Dad the Gospel, talked and debated with him, left him Gospel tracts, Bibles, books, written to him a number of times, and now he was at death's dark door... very much alone and scared. It was heart-breaking to watch, and I was going through many emotions... sadness, frustration, pity, sorrow, anger, helplessness, guilt, regret, plus a whole host of other things.

Donna and I stayed overnight, and in the morning Donna received a call from him at 6.00am, so we both went down the stairs to see Dad, and help him in every way possible. We sat with him for two hours. Over the last few days, we'd had hardly any sleep, so when he was dozing off again, we went back upstairs to grab a couple more hours as Donna had said to him to just give her another call if he needed anything.

Donna awoke at 9.40am and went to check on him, and then called me immediately. I went down and we found him **on his knees** holding a chair. I placed my hand on his back and head and they were very cold, he had stopped 'gasping', and was perfectly still. The stillness and silence was surreal. His soul had departed from his body. The end had come. My Dad had died and now he was 'gone'. He'd slipped into eternity just an hour or so beforehand... but where had he gone, Heaven or Hell?

I cannot explain, or put into words, how the Lord sorted everything out over those final days. It was all a 'miracle' as to what happened, and there is no way I would have pictured myself reconciling with my Dad in the last moments of his life, while trying yet again to 'save' him from going to Hell. I am so thankful to the Lord for helping my wife Donna and myself through all of this.

Donna is so much stronger than I with this kind of situation, and I leant on her so much that week. We are both grieving in different ways at present, and have had to push things back in our minds, as we're not ready to deal with them just yet.

I won't know until Heaven as to whether my Dad got saved or not, the Lord knows. This man who had spent 89 years of life fighting and striving against God his Creator (Isaiah 45v9, Proverbs 13v15), finished up by **dying on his knees**... God gets all the glory no matter what man may think himself to be. Every atheist will fall on his knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord eventually (Philippians 2v5-11), whether in time or eternity. If he does it in this life, he'll get saved and go to Heaven. If he does it in eternity, he'll go to Hell afterwards (Matthew 21v44).

My feelings now after penning this booklet are... so much sorrow... *'If only', lots of guilt, 'I could have done more'... regret, sadness, failure, and loss.* I wasn't the son my Dad wanted, or could have been, and my Dad wasn't the Dad I wanted, and could have been; we both made many mistakes.

We hardly ever agreed on anything. His atheism and humanism set us poles apart. When I became a Christian at the age of 18 it disappointed him and sadly destroyed our relationship, which would never recover. I'm just so thankful to the Lord that I had one last chance with him, and only the Lord knows how it ended.

For those of you who are in similar situations, my suggestions, advice, *call it what you will*, is this...

Swallow your pride and make the *first step* towards reconciliation. Don't let it go a moment longer. Don't do what I did and become estranged to your loved ones. Call, visit, email, or write a letter, but do something and try hard to put things right. Again, none of you will really understand my experience, but hopefully you can take something from all of this, for your own situation.

It's heart-breaking, but 'death is a part of life' as you all know. I feel very sad for my Dad, and for what could and should have been, but wasn't. I know I can't go back... I can't try again... I can't talk to him anymore... he's gone, and he's left a void in my life.

When death comes, it really does 'sting'... it hurts, and it's crushing.

1 Corinthians 15v53 **For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**

54 **So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal**

shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

I thank God that soon, 'death' shall be no more. **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.** Revelation 21v4.

Learn to forgive and don't hold grudges. Don't let bitterness take hold of you, as this will destroy your life.

I hope to see my Dad in Heaven... but I don't know... I just hope.

The question now is...

Do you know where you are going when you die? You can 'know'...!

1 John 5v11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

You have a choice: to die 'in your sins' and take them to Hell with you... or... 'to die with your sins forgiven' and go to Heaven.

We are all sinners, and Jesus Christ came to take all of our sins upon Himself, die, be judged in our place, go to Hell for us, and rise again the third day conquering sin and death. For all those who have put their faith and trust

in what He did, in other words, **believed the Gospel** (the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ), we can have everlasting life and a place in Heaven. You either receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, or you reject Him, that's your choice.

Here are some Scriptures from the Bible to help you understand more...

Romans 3v23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 5v12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Romans 6v23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15v1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Hebrews 9v27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

John 3v16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Acts 16v30+31 ...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Colossians 1v14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

After reading these Scriptures, why don't you cry out to the Lord Jesus Christ asking Him to forgive all of your sins?

Romans 10v9 **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

10 **For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

11 **For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

12 **For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.**

13 **For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

Don't leave it a moment longer, get saved today and become a Christian.

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you washed in the blood?

In the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb?

Are your garments spotless? Are they white as snow?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Elisha Hoffman

Bereavement can be such a sad, lonely, terrible time. If you're struggling, talk. Don't go it alone. It hit me hard, and if I can help you in anyway, let me know.

Here are a few verses of comfort from the Holy Scriptures...

Psalm 62v8 **Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us.** Have you talked to the Lord recently?

Psalm 27v10 **When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.** Our families can let us down, but the Lord Jesus will never let us down.

Psalm 68v5+6 **A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.** The Lord understands what we are going through.

Job 19v14 **My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.** How often this happens. Have you run to the Lord for help and salvation? He'll never fail or forget you.

Isaiah 49v16 **Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands...** He was crucified for you.

Psalm 49v15 **But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.** There is life after death, and what you have done with Jesus Christ in this life, will determine where you spend eternity, either in Heaven or Hell, and that choice is yours right now.

Psalm 73v24-26 **Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.** The Lord will guide us through the trials of this life if we let Him.

Proverbs 18v24 **...there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.** That friend, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4v21 **...the truth is in Jesus:**

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my Lord
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small
Love so amazing so divine
Demands my soul my life my all.

Isaac Watts

A personal note...

I will carry this sad and true account of my Dad's death with me until my own work on earth is done. I enjoyed my childhood, not knowing what was really going on 'behind the scenes', and what problems my parents were having together. As a child, life is full of fun, and *should* be. Your parents are your protectors, guardians, and people you can love, trust and turn to about anything, but sadly, for many, this is not the case.

I loved my Dad. He was my 'hero' when I was a child, but as I got older and found my own path through life, we grew apart, as he didn't approve of my choices, and wouldn't accept me as a Christian.

Now he has left this world, and all I have is memories. As you are reading this, my Dad is 'somewhere', Heaven or Hell, only the Lord knows, but one day I too shall find out. I hope it's Heaven.

Every day I think about him, but I have to stop myself from entering 'dark places' where my heart would just break, as I have many regrets. Like you, we all have to deal with 'life and death', and it's very hard at times. We don't want things to happen the way they do, but oftentimes we find ourselves in places because of the choices we've made, whether they be good or bad.

I have chosen to walk with the Lord Jesus Christ, asking Him to guide me through life. It's the best decision I ever made, and would urge you to do the same.

The Lord said... **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.** Hebrews 13v5.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death. Psalm 48v14.

If I can help further, please contact me...

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...thou shalt be missed,
because thy seat will be empty.

1 Samuel 20v18.

This booklet was given to you by...

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