

"INCLINE YOUR EAR
TO MY CRY" (PSALM
88): THE PANDEMIC
AND WALTER
BRUEGGEMANN'S
THEOLOGY OF
LAMENT

PELAYO, MAVERICK . ArchDSanFer

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has truly caused a global crisis considering its various effects particularly the death toll as well as the surge on the number of recorded cases not mentioning its continued medical, economic and political impacts. It has drastically disrupted the usual course of doing things by which the world and individuals are accustomed to. Most of all, it has affected the lives of individuals reeling from the multi-faceted effects of the pandemic. It is on this account then that the paper seeks to offer the role and relevance of lament during crises like this pandemic. It is the main inquiry of the paper to explore how the practice of lament in Walter Brueggemann's theology can be applied and appropriated through times of crisis especially highlighting the post-pandemic situation through several steps. The paper lays out Walter Brueggemann's theology of lament and tries to exemplify such understanding by employing his framework on Psalm 88, considered as the saddest psalm in the Scriptures, as a testcase. Through exposition and analysis, the key themes of Brueggemann's understanding of the psalms specifically the lament psalms are first elucidated. Then, by employing characterization and poetry analysis of the psalmist and the LORD while comparing and contrasting two translations of Psalm 88 (English and Kapampangan), the paper explores the characterization of the divine and the psalmist and how the poetry intensifies thus penetrating lament in all its depth. Consequently, implications of Walter Brueggemann's theology of lament and Psalm 88 to the context of the pandemic and even post-pandemic are elucidated towards the end of the paper.