

# Sigh And Cry

During the eight months leading up to September 1983 the Ipswich and Norwich churches where I served as local elder were inflicted with the excitement of an expectant grandfather.

In the early hours of 4<sup>th</sup> September 1983 the much awaited event happened.

My only daughter gave birth to my first granddaughter Rachel.

On the following Sabbath morning the bottom dropped out of my world.

Just before I left to preach a sermon in the Ipswich church, the news arrived that Rachel had a virus infection and was not expected to live very long. She had been given a sedative drug to sedate her to try and avoid convulsions which would kill her. Tests were being made to isolate the strain of virus so that the correct drugs could be used to combat it.

Rachel and my daughter were rushed to a special care unit for babies some 25 miles away.

I left for Sabbath services that day with a heavy heart, arriving late but in time to give the sermon. Halfway through I lost my concentration and had to explain to the congregation the reason why.

Ipswich church must have prayed for Rachel, for the result of the tests the following Monday were negative showing no trace of the virus.

The sedating drugs were discontinued, but after several days, when the drugs should have worn off, Rachel was still **not** making much in the way of movement.

After persistent questioning the doctors admitted that due to the cord being tight around Rachel's neck for some time before birth, she had sustained extensive brain damage.

The part of the brain most affected was linked to the movement of the limbs and control of the muscles.

Rachel's future life was very limited, she could not sit up without support, could not crawl and had very limited movement of her limbs.

Rachel struggled to say a few words but that was about all.

One word she did use often was "*granddad*" for I was her only dad she knew.

Her own father could not accept her condition and left my daughter and eventually they divorced.

## **Why have I told you this story?**

**Not** to gain sympathy, but to tell you how the Creator God has used this tragedy to eradicate a great flaw in my character, a real deep compassion for the suffering of other human beings.

No way would I have qualified, all those years ago, to be among the group of people who are mentioned in Ezekiel.

**Ezekiel 9:4** [New King James] "*and the LORD said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.'*"

I did **not** then "*sigh and cry*" out to God to the extent I should have done for all those who were cut off from Him because of the deception of Satan, [**Revelation 12:9**] those who were influenced by him

to commit abominations causing so much pain and sorrow, [2 Corinthians 4:4] and leaving people hopeless and frustrated.

God had allowed Satan to bring the results of his world into my own family in a dramatic way that I could not ignore.

I can now relate to King David in **Psalms 119:136** and **Psalms 56:8**, for I too have shed buckets of tears for Rachel and her very limited existence.

**Zechariah 8:4-5** [New King James] *“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. **The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.**’”*

This scripture has great meaning and promise for me now. Rachel was never able to play in the street, she could only sit in her supportive chair and watch others play.

Rachel died at the age of 18 when she was living in a special needs college, in her sleep, after enjoying a party with her boyfriend, also handicapped and wheelchair bound.

**Sighing and crying is the starting point of what the Creator God wants to happen in our lives.**

**As a result of such time on our knees in prayer we will have a greater desire to be part of the future solution to this world’s ills, by preparing now to be a compassionate teacher and guide, assisting our Saviour Jesus Christ after His Second Coming.**

Bringing eventually to all humanity the society that our Creator God desires for all humanity.

**Revelation 21:1-4** [New King James] *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. **And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.**’”*

**This is the world into which my Rachel will be resurrected with a new body that will fulfil all her hopes and desires.**

**May this day soon dawn for my Rachel and all the rest of suffering humanity.**