

## **A Child's Lament**

by Ben Roe, 2010\*

God, you are good.  
    You gave me life and fun.  
I can run, jump, and laugh.  
    You bless me.

I hurt—bad!—all of a sudden!  
    Why do I jerk and freeze? Why do I become stiff as a board?  
Why does no one know what to do with my screams?  
    When will the pain stop?

Please let it stop—now. Please.  
    Yet it keeps on and on and on.  
The doctors think I should be able to stand up.  
    They even think I refuse to stand.

Why can't they see that I can't?

What is happening to me?

My cries bring little relief and I feel like nothing will help.  
    No one will help.  
Nothing I do, nothing they do takes away the pain.  
    It keeps on and on and on.

I smell the smell, I feel the heat.  
    It feels good. Pain is less. I can move—a little.  
I feel the hot water,  
    holding me up.

Mommy and daddy have left me here with them.  
    Why did they leave me?  
Why couldn't they do anything to stop the pain?  
    Where did they go?

The time passes so slowly. Day after day they don't come.  
    Will they ever come back?

Some of these people are really nice.  
    Some are not.  
Some are wonderful, loving, warm. Will you be my mommy?  
    Some are sneaky and do things to me.

Now I go to a different place. At least there are more children here.  
    It was good to see mommy and daddy.  
Why did they have to go?  
    Will I see them again?

Why, God? Why?  
Have you left me, too?  
I want to see you again.  
I want to have fun again.  
Will I ever have fun again?  
Where did you go?

Is that you in her warmth to me?  
Are you really here?

If I lie still, is that you whispering to me?  
Is it you holding me close?  
Is that you down the hall?  
Is that you in the far-off bells?

Please come back and love me again.  
I yearn for that day.

If I ask you to help, will you?  
Please help me get well.  
Please help me walk again.  
Please help me run again.

Please let me go back home.  
Please let me see my sister,  
My mommy  
My daddy—at home.

The sandbox gives me pleasure.  
I feel the grains in my hands, on my legs.  
I see them on my toys.  
I can build things.

I thank you that you are in the sand,  
in the stillness, in the quiet.  
I praise you for the sun, the grass,  
the songs of church and the music.

You are my sandbox,  
you hold me in your hands.  
You give me life and fun.  
God, you are good.

Thank you.