

"I sought the Lord, and He heard me" (Psalm 34:4).

Zach had never felt more worried in his whole life. His dog, Ace, had swallowed something he shouldn't have eaten, and it was stuck inside him. If Ace didn't have surgery right away, he would die!

Dad was at the veterinarian's office now with Ace. Zach wished he could be there too, instead of stuck getting ready for school. With a sigh, he knelt by his bed to say a prayer. "Heavenly Father, I'm really worried about Ace."

Please Bless ACE

By Allison Lee Burton

(Based on a true story)



Please help the surgery to go all right. Please bless Ace to live, and please help me not feel so worried."

Zach knew Heavenly Father loved him and heard his prayer. The worried feeling in his stomach melted away a little bit, and he felt more calm inside. Zach zipped up his backpack and ran to catch the bus. Everything was going to be OK.

At school, Zach kept thinking about Ace. Ace was such a healthy dog. But he got sick so quickly! *What if Ace dies before I can say goodbye?* All of Zach's worried feelings rushed back. Zach took a deep breath and remembered the peace he felt after he prayed that morning. Heavenly Father would answer his prayer, wouldn't He?

When Zach came home from school, he ran straight inside to ask Mom how the surgery went. "Mom! How's Ace?"

"He's OK," said Mom. "He'll be home soon, but he's going to be pretty sore. We'll need to be gentle with him."

Zach let out a big sigh as Mom gave him a hug. He was so relieved. And he couldn't wait to see Ace!

When Ace came home, Zach's family gave him extra care. They brought him his favorite toys. They talked to him and told him how much they loved him. They gently rubbed the fur on his back. Zach took time to scratch Ace's ears. Ace loved the attention. He seemed to be getting better and better.

But the next week, Ace got sick again. He stopped eating and drinking and seemed very tired. Zach's

stomach sank as he watched his parents drive away to take Ace back to the vet.

When Mom and Dad walked through the door a few hours later, they were alone. They gathered the family together and explained that Ace had died. Zach felt numb. He could hear his brothers and sisters crying and felt tears on his own cheeks.

Zach thought about his prayer before Ace's surgery—the prayer that brought him so much comfort and peace. He had asked Heavenly Father to bless Ace to live, but now Ace had died. This wasn't what he prayed for at all!

Mom came over and sat next to Zach on the couch. "Ace was such a good dog," she said. "We had so many happy times with him."

Zach smiled a little as he remembered scratching Ace's ears in just the right spot. Then he thought about the past week.

Ace had lived for 10 more days after the surgery. Zach got to spend time with him and show Ace how much he loved him.

Maybe Heavenly Father really did answer my prayer, Zach thought. A warm feeling came over him like another hug. He still missed Ace, and he still felt sad. But he also felt peace. Zach knew that Heavenly Father had heard his prayer, even if the answer wasn't exactly what he wanted. He knew Heavenly Father loved him. And because of that, everything really would be OK. ●

The author lives in Virginia, USA.



Do you know someone who has died?

Turn the page for some ideas to help you.