

July 28, 2024 PM – Pastor Kevin Olivier
Psalm 77 – “God’s Help for Your Troubles”

- A. As Christians, some of you may feel ashamed to mention doubts, fears, or struggles in your faith to others.
- B. Asaph, the psalmist, expressed his deepest personal struggles and doubts in this psalm.
- C. Though Asaph may have mentioned his struggles of faith abroad, He ultimately sought help from God Himself in his time of need. He gave us an overview statement of the entire Psalm in **v1**. → **v1**

Meditate upon God and His works in times of doubt and trouble.	I. LIFE’S TROUBLES II. BELIEVERS’ DOUBTS III. GOD’S HELP
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I. LIFE’S TROUBLES → **vv2-3**

- A. Look at Asaph’s troubles.
 - 1. He was crying out to God in the midst of his trouble
 - 2. Although he sought God earnestly and without ceasing, his soul refused to be comforted.
 - 3. His spiritual struggles gave him insomnia. → **v4**
 - a. Next time you cannot sleep, consider the origin of the problem.
 - b. Like Asaph, consider that it may be God that is keeping your eyelids opened some reason.
 - 4. If sleeplessness is not bad enough, in **v4** he said, **“I am so troubled that I cannot speak.”**
 - a. Asaph was suffering from a state of deep, debilitating depression.
 - b. He could not talk to others about his anguish, but he was able to write down a very direct and honest record of his feelings, fears, and even doubts concerning God and his life.
- B. What about your troubles or struggles in this life?
 - 1. If we are honest, each of us should admit that we all have troubles from time to time that can weigh us down.
 - 2. One of Job’s counselors, Eliphaz, gave advise that was a mixture of truth and error. In **Job 5:7**, he said something absolutely true: **“Man is born to trouble, as sparks fly upward.”**
 - 3. In **Ps 77**, Asaph did not give the source of his immense sorrow. The Holy Spirit may have directed him to leave this fact out so that you can better own this psalm as your own and apply it to your problems.
 - a. The psalms deal with the whole spectrum of human emotions while giving us real, down-to-earth solutions.
 - b. Use the words of this and other psalms in your prayers. Instead of speaking of God in the third person, speak to him directly using these words.
 - c. Many of us could learn from Asaph how to be direct and honest in bringing our feelings, fears, and petitions to God’s throne of grace in prayer.

II. BELIEVERS' DOUBTS → vv5-9

- A. In the midst of his suffering, Asaph tried many things with a sincere heart of devotion.
1. In vv1-2, he cried to the Lord in prayer.
 2. He remembered one of his own song of praises according to v6.
 3. He meditated upon God, yet what his spirit pondered produced some bad thoughts. →vv7-10
- C. If some Christians ever heard fellow church members asking questions like this, they might doubt that such a person is true believer at all.
1. Christians can and do have spiritual doubts; however, they do not remain there.
 2. This psalm can help us to more gracious with those suffering from fears, doubts, and depression.
 3. Asaph was a man who loved God and was loved by God.
 - a. God gave Asaph His Holy Spirit to write the very Word of God. [this & other Ps(s)]
 - b. Asaph doubted God at times as did many other great and godly men.
 - 1) God used Elijah to carry out miraculous works to give him victory against the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel.
 - 2) After he discovered that evil Queen Jezebel sought his life, he hid in a cave said to God: **“I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (1 Ki 19:10).**
 4. If you have ever questioned God or still question God and His faithfulness, you are not alone.
- D. Even mature men and women of God can and have suffered from depression and doubt.
1. Consider Charles H. Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers, who suffered from depression.¹
 2. True Christians can and do weep. Rom 12:15 says, **“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”**

III. GOD'S HELP →vv1-2

- A. Notice first that Asaph prayed even when troubled, weary, doubting, and in grief.
1. Some people, even professing Christians rarely pray— even in times of trouble.
 2. We have access to the throne of heaven yet often do not pray as we ought.
 3. Asaph diligently laid hold to his privileged position as a son of the Most High God.
- B. Notice also how Asaph prayed with diligence.
1. He was not only seeking the Lord during the day, in v2 he wrote, **“in the night my hand was stretched out without wearying”**
 - a. Asaph persevered in prayer even when facing trouble and doubt. He pressed on; so should you!
 - b. Asaph was so troubled he could speak to others yet continued to speak to God.
 2. Asaph also mixed his prayer with meditation. This is a lost art in our day.
 - a. Meditation to many Christians brings strange things to their minds.
 - b. Asaph mixed prayer with meditation and faith was delivered.
- C. At first his meditation produced doubts concerning God, yet notice what Asaph meditated upon and remembered. →vv11-20
1. Asaph brought to mind God's miraculous works which were not merely a demonstration of His power. God's wonders of old were clearly tied to His covenant love in delivering His people.
→ v20
 2. All the signs and wonders Asaph spoke about were wonderful and glorious; however, they were merely a type and shadow of the coming Messiah.

Further application and conclusion:

¹ <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-christians-heaviness-and-rejoicing/#flipbook/>