

Training in the Art of Remembrance

Psalm 77

1. vs 1-9 The Darkness of Despair

vs 1-2 — Praying in Anguish

vs 3-6 — Remembering the Pain

vs 3 moan and groan

vs 4 unable to sleep and unable to speak

vs 6 forgetful

vs 7-9 - Tormenting Doubt

- Will the Lord spurn? Has he rejected us forever?
- Will he show his favor to Israel again?
- Has his love ceased?
- Have his promises failed?
- Has he forgotten to be gracious to us?
- Is he so angry that he shut off his compassion?

The psalmist's affliction is so great that it has consumed him with doubts about God — his character, his relationship, his faithfulness, even his nearness!

Are you facing loss, grief, or struggle for which you can't seem to find relief? Name it out loud to God. How do your deepest struggles affect you physically, emotionally, spiritually? What doubt-filled questions do you battle? What have been the questions you've asked God throughout this year?

2. vs 10-11 Determined Declaration

I WILL!

vs. 10 I will appeal: It isn't God who has forgotten; it's my own struggle to remember.

"I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Using the name "Most High" is a confession of God's divine goodness and plan compared to our complaining and lack of belief.

This is not minimizing the struggle. Rather, it is magnifying God!

Our struggles can seem overwhelming, yet our God is bigger still.

What will I remember? **The Lord's deeds, the Lord's wonders, the Lord's work.**

3. vs 13-15 Faith-filled Deliverance

not from our external circumstances, but from our internal anguish and unbelief
hope when our circumstances remained unchanged

vs 13 - YOUR way is holy

vs 14 - YOU are the God who works wonders

vs 15 - YOU with your arm redeemed your people

When we can't see God in our present, we can remember him in our past!

You can take every question Asaph asked and find the answers in Scripture.

- He is gracious and abounding in love. (Psalm 103:8, Psalm 145:8)
- He upholds us with his righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)
- When we walk through the fire and the flood he is with us. (Isaiah 43:1-15)
- God came to earth in the flesh to save us. (Matthew 1:21, John 1:1-18)
- Jesus' life, death, and resurrection was witnessed by actual people. (Matthew 28: 9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11)
- He saved us, took our sin and our old selves and gave us new life through his grace. (Ephesians 1-3)
- He gave us his Holy Spirit so we are never ever alone. (Matthew 28:20, Romans 5:5, Ephesians 1:13)
- His plans are not our plans but are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs all our sufferings. (Isaiah 58:8-10, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)
- His love never fails. (Psalm 136, Romans 8:31-39)

What disciplines do you have in your life to help you learn the ways of God? Throughout history? In your own life? This week, search for the answers to your questions in Scripture and meditate on the deeds of the Lord.

4. vs 16-20 Art-filled Remembrance

vs 19-20 You way was through the sea,
your path through the waters
your footprints unseen
you led
your people

What is one Old Testament story of God's faithfulness that bolsters your faith? What is your personal story of finding Jesus? Read (and consider memorizing) Titus 3:3-7. Write out who you were or who you would be without Jesus. Share this good news with a friend or family member during this month of the anniversary of the start of this incredibly difficult year.