

Facing Our Disappointments



"¹³ O God, your ways are holy. Is there any god as mighty as you?" ¹⁹ Your road led through the sea, your pathway through the mighty waters—a pathway no one knew was there!" Psalm 77:2 NLT

- What are some disappointments that you have had in life? Have you ever had a disappointment turn into a blessing?

Psalm 77 is an ancient Hebrew song of worship. The theme is - **how do I deal with life's disappointments?** (See Psalm 77:2). The psalmist is appealing to God to intervene and rescue Israel from her agony. Psalm 77 has four parts, or in musical terms, stanzas. Each section ends with the word "interlude" in the *New Living Translation* or "Selah" in other translations. 1. (77:1-3). 2. (77:4-9). 3. (77:10-15). 4. (77:16-20).

Like Psalm 74, this psalm is attributed to **Asaph** as the author. This is not the Asaph who directed the worship in the Temple in David's reign (1 Chron. 16:4-7). This had to be a descendant named after him.

Central Lesson:
God's ways are Holy and He will lead us through our disappointments.

Reasons for Disappointment

1. (Psalm 77:1-3) **Disappointed in God's apparent LACK of help with deep trouble.**

"¹ I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! ² When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord. All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven, but my soul was not comforted. ³ I think of God, and I moan, overwhelmed with longing for his help."

Why did God not respond to the psalmist's plea for help? God was not answering because Israel was under punishment. God had spoken repeatedly in the past by warning Israel that judgment was coming if they did not turn from their immoral and pagan sinfulness. They continually ignored God. The last of the Prophets was Jeremiah who prophesied that the Babylonians would be allowed by God to conquer them and lead them into captivity for 70 years as punishment for their sin (Jer.21:4-5; 25:2-14; 29:10-14). God was not responding because He had already spoken. There was nothing more to say, at least for the next 70 years.

2. (Psalm 77:4-9) **Disappointed that the "good old days" have PASSED.**

"⁴ You don't let me sleep. I am too distressed even to pray! ⁵ I think of the good old days, long since ended, ⁶ when my nights were filled with joyful songs. I search my soul and ponder the difference now."

"⁷ Has the Lord rejected me forever? Will he never again be kind to me? ⁸ Is his unfailing love gone forever? Have his promises permanently failed? ⁹ Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he slammed the door on his compassion?"

3. (Psalm 77:10-15) **Disappointed in the present DIRECTION of the psalmist life.**

"¹⁰ And I said, 'This is my fate; the Most High has turned his hand against me.'" ¹¹ The psalmist was disappointed because it appeared that there was no help or change in his situation. His present misfortune was his new normal, his fate. However, God has His surprises and His plan for each individual varies. God will bless those who seek and obey Him.

How to Face Our Disappointments

1. **Find encouragement in what God has DONE in the past. (77:11-12).**

"¹¹ But then I recall all you have done, O Lord; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago. ¹² They are constantly in my thoughts. I cannot stop thinking about your mighty works."

Disappointment can cause us to get stuck in self-pity. We may need time to review and evaluate our circumstances. We may need time to process our emotions. Eventually, however, we need to leave our disappointment behind and take steps in a new positive direction. Remembering God's past blessing and guidance in our lives can help this process.

Bible teacher, Warren Wiersbe, explained, "During the crisis experiences of life, there comes a time when we must get ourselves by the nape of the neck and shake ourselves out of pity into reality, and that's what Asaph did here...." (*The Transformation Study Bible*, 77:10-12).

2. **Find encouragement in that God's WAYS are holy (77:13).**

"¹³ O God, your ways are holy. Is there any god as mighty as you?"

God's ways are holy. His ways are best. Trust him when life doesn't make sense.

3. **Find encouragement in that God is our all-powerful REDEEMER (77:14-15).**

"¹⁴ You are the God of great wonders! You demonstrate your awesome power among the nations. ¹⁵ By your strong arm, you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph."

4. **Find encouragement in that God leads His people THROUGH their troubles (77:16-20).**

"¹⁹ Your road led through the sea, your pathway through the mighty waters—a pathway no one knew was there! ²⁰ You led your people along that road like a flock of sheep, with Moses and Aaron as their shepherds."

These verses reflect back to the time God split-apart the Red Sea so Israel could walk over to the other side and escape the pursuing Egyptian army. As the psalmist stated, God had for Israel "...a pathway no one knew was there!" God has His pathways for us through our trouble that may not be seen at the present.

Someone posted on social media, "Remember, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. God didn't put out the fire. He just put Jesus in there with them and they came out without smoke. It's not about God stopping all the things that look bad; it's about who is in there with you." (The back story can be read in Daniel 3).

Central Lesson:
God's ways are Holy and He will lead us through our disappointments.

- Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.