

Finding Faith in the Fog

A Devotional on Psalm 77 for the Worried and Frustrated Soul

If you've ever found yourself questioning, "Where is God in all of this?" or feeling as though He's withdrawn from your life, you're not alone. Psalm 77 offers a window into the heart of someone grappling with these very questions. As you read, I encourage you to place yourself in the shoes of the psalmist. Consider how his struggle mirrors your own feelings of frustration, worry, and perhaps even a bit of bitterness as you wonder why God seems silent.

Psalm 77 doesn't offer instant answers. Instead, it guides us on a journey that moves from questioning to remembering, and finally to trusting. Let's look at how this ancient psalm speaks to our modern struggles and how God's Word offers us both understanding and a way forward.

1. Acknowledging the Darkness: "In the Day of My Trouble I Seek the Lord" (Psalm 77:2)

The psalm opens with the raw, unfiltered cry of the psalmist: "I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me." This isn't a casual prayer. It's the prayer of a heart gripped by anxiety, weighed down by frustration. The psalmist says, "*In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted*" (Psalm 77:2). This is someone who has prayed, who has pleaded, and yet still feels empty.

If you are someone who has prayed earnestly, pouring out your anxieties and requests, yet still find yourself frustrated and without comfort, know that the psalmist understands. God's Word is giving voice to what you feel. Acknowledging this struggle is the first step. Often, we mask our worries or downplay our frustrations, trying to "keep it together." But God invites you to lay bare the reality of your heart before Him, just as the psalmist does here.

2. Recognizing the Source of Our Worry: "Will the Lord Spurn Forever?" (Psalm 77:7-9)

As the psalmist continues, he poses questions that reflect his growing anxiety and deep-seated fears. He asks:

*"Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable?
Has his steadfast love forever ceased?
Are his promises at an end for all time?
Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he in anger shut up his compassion?"* (Psalm 77:7-9)

These are the questions of a heart in turmoil, wondering if God has turned His back for good. The psalmist's worries aren't just about his present suffering; they touch on something deeper—his fear that God's character has changed, that His promises have somehow expired.

In our modern lives, worry often arises from a similar place. We fear that our struggles mean God has abandoned us or that our anxieties are beyond His control. We may question whether God is truly with us in our trials. This questioning reveals a misunderstanding that many of us carry, whether consciously or not: we believe that God's favor is tied to our circumstances. When things go well, we assume He is pleased with us; when things go wrong, we wonder if He has turned away.

3. Shifting Focus: From Circumstances to God's Faithfulness

In verse 10, there's a noticeable shift: "*Then I said, 'I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High'*" (Psalm 77:10). The psalmist begins to recall God's past deeds, His mighty works in history. He chooses to refocus, not on his present confusion, but on God's proven faithfulness.

For us, this shift is essential. When anxiety and frustration cloud our view, we need a perspective anchored not in the present struggle but in the proven character of God. Psalm 77 invites us to look back and remember the countless times God has been faithful to His people.

In practical terms, this might mean reflecting on God's faithfulness in Scripture, such as His deliverance of Israel from Egypt or His care for the exiles. Or it could mean recalling times in your own life where God provided, answered, or comforted you in ways that were beyond your expectations. This remembrance grounds us. It reminds us that while our circumstances fluctuate, God's character does not.

4. Moving from Frustration to Faith: Remembering God's Work in Your Life

The psalmist continues in verses 11-12: *"I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds."* When the psalmist meditates on God's works, he's deliberately choosing to dwell on truth, even though his feelings haven't caught up yet.

Consider adopting this practice yourself. Make a list of times when you've seen God work, whether in your life or through the stories in the Bible. When anxiety presses in, use this list as a reminder that the God who acted then is still active and present in your life today.

A helpful exercise can be journaling your prayers, listing each request and noting how God eventually answers them, even if it's in unexpected ways. Over time, this journal becomes a personal testimony of God's faithfulness, one you can turn to when anxiety tempts you to doubt.

5. Practical Steps for Turning Anxiety into Trust

While remembering God's faithfulness is crucial, Psalm 77 also gives us a path for practical action:

- **Confess Your Anxieties:** As the psalmist pours out his concerns, he models honest confession. Name your anxieties, fears, and frustrations before God. Instead of allowing them to swirl unchecked, bring each one to the Lord in prayer.
- **Reframe Your Focus:** When worry consumes us, it's often because we're fixated on circumstances we cannot control. Take intentional moments throughout your day to focus on God's sovereignty and love. Meditate on verses like Psalm 46:10: *"Be still, and know that I am God."*
- **Take One Day at a Time:** Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:34 to focus on today and not borrow trouble from tomorrow. If you're overwhelmed, ask God for the grace needed for today and leave tomorrow in His hands.
- **Seek Community:** The psalms were used in Israel's communal worship, reminding us that we're not meant to carry burdens alone. Share your struggles with a trusted friend, mentor, or counselor who can pray with you and encourage you to stay focused on God.

6. Trusting in God's Sovereign Plan

Psalm 77 ends with a powerful image: God leading His people through the Red Sea. This wasn't just an ordinary act; it was a miraculous intervention when the Israelites were trapped between an army and the sea. *"Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen"* (Psalm 77:19).

Here, the psalmist recognizes that God's ways are mysterious, often hidden from us. The path may lead through "the great waters," an image that can feel daunting and chaotic. But God's hand guides us even when we cannot see His "footprints." God doesn't promise us a life without hardship, but He does promise His presence, His guidance, and His purpose in everything we experience.

When you find yourself frustrated with God, doubting His presence, or overwhelmed with anxiety, remember that He may be leading you through a difficult sea, not to abandon you but to refine your trust in Him. Like the Israelites, the waters may rise on either side, but God's path leads through.

Moving from Worry to Worship

Psalm 77 is a journey, much like your own. The psalmist begins in a place of despair and frustration but ends by worshiping the God who leads His people. This psalm invites us to bring every anxious thought, every

frustrating question, and every doubt to the One who knows us completely. He's not put off by our questions; He wants us to seek Him earnestly, even if that means wrestling through our doubts.

As you walk through your own struggles with worry and frustration, know that God is with you in the dark. He calls you to lift your eyes from your circumstances and fix them on His unchanging character. And as you do, may you find rest and reassurance in the One who leads His people through the sea.

Taking the Psalm to Jesus

1. From Crying Out to God to Finding Rest in Christ's Presence (Psalm 77:1-3)

Psalm 77 opens with a desperate cry to God in times of trouble. The psalmist's anguish is evident as he stretches out his hands all night, seeking comfort but finding none. His question reflects a longing that many of us recognize today: *Where is God when I need Him most?*

In the New Testament, we find an answer to this question in Jesus Christ, who not only hears our cries but assures us of His ongoing presence. Jesus invites all who are weary and burdened to come to Him for rest: *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28). When we, like the psalmist, are overwhelmed and our hearts refuse to be comforted, we can turn to Jesus, knowing that He is gentle and compassionate toward our weaknesses.

Psalm 77's cry for comfort finds its ultimate answer in Jesus, who promises never to leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). For the Christian, the presence of Christ is an ever-present comforter and counselor, providing peace even in the midst of our most intense struggles.

2. From Questions of Abandonment to Assurance in Christ's Love (Psalm 77:7-9)

The psalmist wrestles with profound questions: *"Will the Lord spurn forever? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time?"* These questions expose a heart struggling to trust in God's promises and faithfulness. In the New Testament, however, we have a guarantee of God's steadfast love and His unbreakable promises in Christ.

Paul reminds us in Romans 8:38-39 that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. He says, *"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."* This promise means that when doubts about God's love arise—when we feel abandoned or wonder if His steadfast love has ceased—we can hold fast to the certainty of God's love that has been demonstrated and secured in Jesus.

The psalmist's questions lead us directly to the cross, where Jesus' sacrifice is the ultimate proof that God's love for us is unchanging and unwavering. Christ's death and resurrection remind us that God's promises are not temporary but eternal, guaranteed through Jesus' finished work.

3. From Remembering Past Deeds to Recognizing Fulfillment in Christ (Psalm 77:10-12)

In verses 10-12, the psalmist shifts from his distress to recall God's mighty deeds in history. He reflects on the power and wonders God displayed in the past. For the Christian, this act of remembering God's works is fulfilled in Christ, who is the ultimate revelation of God's power and love.

When we look at Jesus' life, we see the wonders of God's compassion, healing, and authority over all creation. The miracles of Jesus—the blind seeing, the lame walking, the dead raised—are acts of power that declare God's heart for His people. The cross and resurrection, the ultimate signs of God's love and sovereignty, display a work of redemption far greater than any Old Testament miracle.

As Christians, we don't only look back at God's work in biblical history, but we fix our gaze on Christ, who embodies all of God's goodness and power. Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of every act of God's kindness, justice, and mercy, and by looking to Him, we see that God's faithful work continues through His Son.

4. From Despair to Living Hope in the Resurrection (Psalm 77:13-15)

The psalmist's reflection on God's holiness and redemption for His people culminates in verses 13-15, where he praises God for His work of salvation. This section finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus, who came to redeem not only Israel but all of humanity.

Peter speaks of this redemption in 1 Peter 1:3-5, saying, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* In Christ, we have a "living hope" that transcends even the darkest moments of despair. Just as the psalmist saw God's hand redeeming Israel, we see Christ as the one who redeems our lives, guaranteeing an eternal hope that cannot be shaken.

Our hope isn't merely for a better earthly outcome; it is rooted in the resurrection, in the knowledge that death and suffering do not have the final word. The psalmist's reflection on redemption points us to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, securing for us an inheritance that will never fade away.

5. From the Waters of the Red Sea to Christ (Psalm 77:16-20)

Psalm 77 closes with a vivid image of God's deliverance through the waters of the Red Sea. The psalmist recalls how God made a way through the sea, guiding His people with His unseen footprints. For Christians, this image resonates deeply with our own deliverance and baptism (union) in Christ.

The apostle Paul draws this connection in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, where he describes the Israelites' passage through the sea as a type of baptism. Just as God led His people out of slavery through the waters, we are led out of sin and death through our faith in Christ. Romans 6:4 emphasizes this imagery: *"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."*

The crossing of the Red Sea prefigures the new life we receive in Christ. In our moments of fear and worry, we remember that we, too, have been "carried through the waters"—from death to life—by the saving work of Jesus. The same God who parted the sea for Israel has made a way for us through the cross.

6. Living Out Psalm 77 in Light of Christ

The journey of Psalm 77 is not complete until we see it fulfilled in the person of Jesus. When we feel frustrated, abandoned, or anxious, this psalm points us to Christ as the final answer to each of our deepest questions:

- **When we wonder if God hears us**, we remember that Jesus is our intercessor, seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding on our behalf (Romans 8:34).
- **When we feel abandoned**, we look to the cross, where Jesus took on the ultimate abandonment so that we would never be separated from God's love.
- **When we question God's love**, we fix our eyes on Jesus, who gave Himself up for us as proof of God's steadfast love.
- **When we recall God's deeds in the past**, we remember that every one of them pointed forward to Christ, the greatest revelation of God's power and mercy.

Psalm 77 invites us to cry out, remember, and ultimately trust. But as Christians, we go a step further, knowing that Christ's death and resurrection are the greatest guarantees of God's faithfulness, goodness, and promises. Through Christ, we are reminded that God's character is sure, His promises are unbreakable, and His love is unfailing.

So, in your frustration, in your worries, let Psalm 77 guide you to the Savior. Allow it to remind you that your cries have been heard, your salvation has been secured, and your life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3). As we journey through the psalm's questions and remembrances, we ultimately arrive at a place of rest—not because all our problems are solved, but because Christ has overcome the world (John 16:33). In Him, we find our ultimate answer, our true hope, and our eternal peace.

