

**Welcome to the  
Common Ground Café!**



**Sunday, August 5, 2018**

**Staking a Claim on the Past  
A Study of Psalm 77**

**[www.hillcrest.church](http://www.hillcrest.church)**

What song always seems to bring you back? Where does it bring you back to?

Psalm 77 is a song about memory. In the first half, the poet, Asaph, vividly describes how miserable he is. In the second half, he explains what he has decided to do about it.

### **What Happens When We See God In the Shadow of Our Hardship**

Read verses 1-9 of Psalm 77.

Asaph describes how his troubles have resulted in physical, emotional, and even spiritual symptoms. Look over verses 1-9 again and do the following:

- ❖ List phrases describing the physical symptoms brought on by Asaph's trials. Then discuss how hardship impacts us physically.
- ❖ List phrases describing the emotional symptoms brought on by Asaph's trials. Then discuss how hardship impacts us emotionally.
- ❖ List phrases describing the spiritual symptoms brought on by Asaph's trials. Then discuss how hardship impacts us spiritually.

Is it the physical, emotional, or spiritual symptoms that disturb you most?

In what ways is going through tough times the same for all people? In what ways is it different for a believer in Christ?

## **What Happens When We See Our Hardship In the Light of Our God**

Read verses 10-20 of Psalm 77.

In verse 10, Asaph turns the corner. He quits complaining about his hardships and he starts lifting them up to God. He says he is going to make an appeal. Answer the following:

- ❖ In legal proceedings, what is an appeal? Why is it made? What can it do?
- ❖ What did Asaph mean when he said he was going to appeal to God's "right hand"? (How can verses 11-12 help you understand this image in verse 10?)

Read verse 19. Verses 16-20 describe a specific event from Israel's history. What event? Review Exodus 14 and describe in your own words the dramatic rescue of God's people.

This event happened many centuries before Asaph was born. Answer the following questions:

- ❖ If it happened to another generation centuries earlier, why did he "remember" this as if it had happened to him?
- ❖ What can this teach us about the value of Bible study? In other words, when we read of a specific event that the disciples experienced with Jesus in the Four Gospels, in what way can we say the event was something "we" experienced?
- ❖ In addition, what can this teach us about hearing the testimonies of other Christians? How does hearing about God's activity among others help you face difficulties now?

The interesting thing is, Asaph was “remembering” in verses 1-9 as well as in verses 10-20. In other words, memory alone wasn’t saving him in verses 1-9. Answer the following questions:

- ❖ Read verses 3-6 again. Why did “remembering” in verses 3-6 make him so miserable and yet “remembering” in verses 10-20 restored his faith?
- ❖ Is there a difference between just remembering “the good old days” and remembering how God intervened in a crisis?

In verse 19, Asaph said God led his people through the parted waters of the Red Sea “though your footprints were not seen.” Has there ever been a time when you knew God was leading you though his footprints were not seen?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests