

# **Bible Study on Psalms**

## **Individual Lament Psalms – Help in Our Darkest Hour**

These lament psalms were first prayed by biblical individuals crying out to God for help. Think of ways these psalms can be a part of your own devotional life, especially during times of darkness and distress.

A few psalms that fit into this category are Psalms 27, 42, 43, 71, and 77.

### **Psalm 27**

Read Psalm 27 and work through these questions.

1. Verse 1 – Invocation. Whom is the psalmist addressing?
2. Verses 2-3 – Expression of Lament. What is the psalmist's complaint?
3. Verses 4-6 – Confession of confidence in God. What does the psalmist trust God to do?
4. Verses 7-12 – Petition for help. What does the psalmist ask of God?
5. Verses 13-14 – Praise of God. What prayer of adoration does the psalmist offer?

### **Psalms 42-43**

Read Psalms 42-43 and work through these questions.

1. What is disturbing the psalmist in 42:5, 11; 43:5?
2. What images does the psalmist use to tell of longing for God's presence in 42:1, 2, 9?
3. How does the psalmist express his opportunity to worship in the temple in 42:4; 43:4?
4. What joys come to you when you worship in God's house?

### **Psalm 71**

Read Psalm 71 and work through these questions. It is a prayer for God's help in old age.

1. What images of safety are offered in verses 1, 3, 5, 7, 19?
2. How can we and do we do what is said in verse 18?

## Psalm 77

Read Psalm 77 and work through these questions. Asaph wrote Psalm 77. We know little about him, other than the fact that he led one of King David's choirs.

1. What words or phrases in verse 1-4 suggests the pain and distress Asaph experienced as he wrote?
2. What do the questions Asaph asks in verses 7-9 tell us about the cause of his anguish?
3. What kinds of situations in people's lives today would cause them to experience distress like that of Asaph and to ask the kinds of questions he asked?
4. What does the psalmist do despite his despair in verses 10-12?
5. Tell about a time when remembering God's goodness in the past helped you as you faced hardships?
6. In verses 15-17 what great act of God does Asaph recall?
7. To what does Asaph compare the Lord to? How can that be comforting to us?

After reading and rereading a psalm, ask yourself these questions. What words or phrases stick out to you? How do these words or phrases reveal the poet's purpose for the psalm? What effect does this psalm have on you as you meditate on it?