

SERIES TITLE: **SURVIVAL SONGS**

PART FIVE: **SURVIVING DAYS OF DISTRESS**

TEXT: **PSALM 77**

#### **INTRODUCTION.**

This series focuses on seven songs from the Hymnal of Scripture—the Psalms. This collection was written and compiled over a period of perhaps 1,000 years. King David wrote 75 of the Psalms. Asaph and the sons of Korah were also major contributors, while Solomon, Moses, Heman, and Ethan are also named. In 48 cases, the author is not identified. The seven psalms in this study have a survival theme. In each one, the human author expresses some desperate longing or need. We can identify with these feelings of abandonment, fear, guilt, and distress. These honest songs have much to teach us about how God works during such times.

#### **DISCUSSION.**

When you are in the path of a dangerous storm, what kinds of things do you stock up on and why?

#### **EXAMINATION.**

[There are four parts to this Psalm, divided by the word *Selah*]

Vv.1-3 Based on these verses, what is the Psalmist feeling, thinking, or experiencing?

- Why would remembering God cause him to groan?

Vv.4-9 What do you think of the six questions Asaph asks?

- Can you think of other instances in Scripture when God is questioned?

Vv.10-15 What shift of emotion do you see in the Psalmist's words?

- What is significant about the abrupt change from being focused on himself in the first 12 verses, to not mentioning himself in the last 8 verses?
- What are the deeds and miracles the Psalmist remembers?

Vv.16-20 Why does Asaph talk about the waters and earth reacting to God?

- What does he mean by the “unseen footprints” of God (verse 19)?
- How would the image of leading his people like sheep (verse 20) be of comfort?

#### **APPLICATION.**

- This Psalm, like many others, expresses pain to God. Is that something you find difficult to do, or easy? Why?

- If “prayer begins in pain,” have you ever experienced pain as a barrier to prayer? Why?
- How can questioning God be healthy? And when can it be harmful?
- Verses 11-12 are crucial for understanding how to survive days of distress. What role do you see Scripture playing in those situations?
- How can magnifying the Lord relieve your distress?
- If there is no visible evidence that God is at work in your life, how can you stay encouraged, and how can you keep moving forward?
- FACT: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- REACT: What did you feel?
- ACT: What are you going to do?