

1 – OBSERVATION OF PSALM 77

- SUBJECT:** What can we learn about Psalm 77 through careful observation?
- COMPLEMENT:** To observe a passage of Scripture is to read it carefully, asking lots of questions and looking for things that are emphasized, repeated, related, alike, unlike, and true to life.
- IDEA:** To observe well is to know well.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. INTRODUCE THE SEMINAR SERIES

- You are not expected to attend all three seminars.
- All will be recorded via audio.
- These will be interactive seminars. Please bring a Bible, paper, and writing materials – and plan on participating!
- I'll be demonstrating using Logos Bible Software. If you do not currently participate in Immanuel's Faithlife subscription, which includes free Logos Bible Software plus over 500 resources FREE to you! If you have a Logos account already (not as part of this subscription), please email your Logos account name (an email address). I will invite you to participate under that account. If you DO NOT have a Logos account or software, simply send me an email and let me know if you are interested. I will send you an invitation through Faithlife, Logos' parent corporation.
- My email: hartman@ibc.church
- FREE LOGOS TRAINING WITH KIRK STREITMATER. Kirk will be offering an all-day Saturday seminar on September 28, 9-3 p.m., in room B203 at Immanuel. Registration details will be coming soon.

B. REVIEW 3X5 "AT A GLANCE" CHART

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C. SCRIPTURE – PSALM 77 (ESV)

In the Day of Trouble I Seek the Lord

77 TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO JEDUTHUN. A PSALM OF ASAPH.

- ¹ I cry aloud to God,
aloud to God, and he will hear me.
- ² 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.
- ³ When I remember God, I moan;
when I meditate, my spirit faints.
Selah
- ⁴ You hold my eyelids open;
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
- ⁵ I consider the days of old,
the years long ago.
- ⁶ I said, "Let me remember my song in the
night;
let me meditate in my heart."
Then my spirit made a diligent
search:
- ⁷ "Will the Lord spurn forever,
and never again be favorable?
- ⁸ Has his steadfast love forever ceased?
Are his promises at an end for all
time?
- ⁹ Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he in anger shut up his
compassion?" *Selah*
- ¹⁰ Then I said, "I will appeal to this,
to the years of the right hand of the
Most High."
- ¹¹ I will remember the deeds of the LORD;
yes, I will remember your wonders of
old.
- ¹² I will ponder all your work,
and meditate on your mighty deeds.
- ¹³ Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is great like our God?
- ¹⁴ You are the God who works wonders;
you have made known your might
among the peoples.
- ¹⁵ You with your arm redeemed your
people,
the children of Jacob and Joseph.
Selah
- ¹⁶ When the waters saw you, O God,
when the waters saw you, they were
afraid;
indeed, the deep trembled.
- ¹⁷ The clouds poured out water;
the skies gave forth thunder;
your arrows flashed on every side.
- ¹⁸ The crash of your thunder was in the
whirlwind;
your lightnings lighted up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
- ¹⁹ Your way was through the sea,
your path through the great waters;
yet your footprints were unseen.
- ²⁰ You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

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II. WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT PSALM 77 THROUGH CAREFUL OBSERVATION?

A. MY QUESTIONS

1. *How would you describe the overall tone of Psalm 77?*

How does it make you feel?

Does it describe feelings you have ever had? Explain.

2. *If you outlined this Psalm, how would you break it up/ divide it?*

3. The ESV Study Bible lists various categories of Psalms: Laments, Praise, Thanksgiving, Celebrating the Law, Wisdom, Hope, Royal, Historical, and Prophetic. *Which category seems to describe Psalm 77?*

4. *Is there one verse that catches your attention more than the others? Which one and why?*

5. *Is there one word/ phrase that catches your imagination? How?*

B. YOUR QUESTIONS – Lets work through the Psalm section by section and develop some questions. Recall that an easy way to develop a question is to begin it with the words, WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW.

(1) PSALM 77:1-3

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(2) PSALM 77:4-9

(3) PSALM 77:10

(4) PSALM 77:11-15

(5) PSALM 77:16-20

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C. WHAT YOU SAID PLUS...

1. *How do we relate the note of confidence in Psalm 77:1 “he will hear me” with the doubt and struggle Asaph expresses throughout the Psalm?*
2. *In what sense was Asaph seeking comfort? What kind? Based on the context/ words in the Psalm, what did Asaph want?*
3. *Does it help you in as you try and understand this Psalm, to know that though written in the present tense, Asaph is looking back and remembering the struggle from beginning to end?*
4. *Where do you see the turning point of the Psalm? At what verse? Why there? How does the ESV formatting help?*
5. *What is Asaph describing in verses 13-20?*

How does this meditation bring comfort where his recollection of his personal relationship with the Lord in verses 2-6 did not?

What do you conclude?

7. *How does Asaph describe God in the last half of the psalm, beginning in verse 12?*
8. *Consider verse 19, “...Your footsteps were unseen.” Based on the overall context, what do you think this means? How is this a comfort?*

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D. LEFT HAND OBSERVATIONAL FACTS

What did you see that was ...

EMPHASIZED

REPEATED

- *How would you summarize the terms repeated throughout the six questions in verses 7-9?*

RELATED

- Cross reference Psalm 77:7-9 with Exodus 34:6-7.

ALIKE

UNLIKE/ CONTRAST

How would you contrast the fruitless musing in the first half of the Psalm with the last half, from verse 11 forward?

How does the last line (referring to God leading Israel through Moses and Aaron like a flock) contrast with the anguish of the first half of the Psalm, and the turbulent description in verses 16-18?

TRUE TO LIFE

How does this Psalm resonate with your own personal experience?

III. CONCLUSION

That's the first of our three seminars studying Psalm 77! This gets you started in Bible study by observing what we see in the text. Please keep working on it on your own! Next week, on July 21, Alex Hairgrove, Dan Crabtree, and I will talk about how to interpret Hebrew poetry, as well as the process of interpretation in general. We will also look more carefully at Psalm 77, trying to better understand what Asaph, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, is trying to teach us. Come back if you can or look for the audio recording when it is posted on our webpage sometime in August.