

## "Questioning Psalms" by Rev. John C. Tittle

### Scripture Reading: Psalm 77 NRSV

1 I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, that he may 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 I think of God, and I moan; I meditate, and my spirit faints. 4 You keep my eyelids from closing; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. 5 I consider the days of old, and remember the years of long ago. 6 I commune with my heart in the night; I meditate and search my spirit: 7 "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? 8 Has his steadfast love ceased forever? Are his promises at an end for all time? 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" 10 And I say, "It is my grief that the right hand of the Most High has changed." 11 I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; I will remember your wonders of old. 12 I will meditate on all your work, and muse on your mighty deeds. 13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is so great as our God? 14 You are the God who works wonders; you have displayed your might among the peoples. 15 With your strong arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. 16 When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very deep trembled. 17 The clouds poured out water; the skies thundered; your arrows flashed on every side. 18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook. 19 Your way was through the sea, your path, through the mighty waters; yet your footprints were unseen. 20 You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever really been mad at God? How did you express it?
2. What words or phrases jump out at you about this psalm?
3. The psalmist is grilling God, basically putting him on the witness stand. What emotions do you experience reading the psalmist's questions of God?
4. Therapist and Auschwitz survivor Edith Eger says that *the opposite of depression is expression*. How might that apply to this psalm? How can venting to God help us to move forward in faith and life?
5. What do you think of this paradoxical statement in light of this passage: *We need to first conquer, to be able to yield ourselves. We have to first triumph, in order to surrender. Acquire, before we lose it all.*
6. What do you think of this statement by Rabbi Abraham Heschl: *the greatness of a person is measured by how many deep problems that person is concerned with--in the world and in themselves. He then goes on to say that even God has problems--just look at the Bible. God is always wrestling with the problem of human beings. God understands our problems, because he has them too!*
7. How might remembering and reliving God's acts in the past (the Exodus, Jesus' miracles, the crucifixion and resurrection) help us in the present?