

## **Questions on Psalm 77**

1. What word marks the highest-level divisions of the Psalm, and what four divisions does it point out?
2. What contrast is there between the first two sections and the last two?
3. In the light of this contrast, what is the function of v. 1?
4. What progression in v. 2 indicates the depth of the Psalmist's woe?
5. What refuge does he seek in v. 3, and how successful is it?
6. What is the surprising source of his malaise, according to v. 4?
7. What contrast with his present discomfort do verses 5 and 6 recall?
8. What is the relation of vv. 7-9 to the previous verses, in particular the end of v. 6?
9. How might v. 4 and 1 Pet 5:6 explain v. 10? (Omit the italicized words.) (This verse is extremely difficult; two key words are ambiguous in Hebrew, leading to several divergent interpretations. In my opinion, the renderings adopted by the AV are the most likely, but even here there is room for alternative interpretation—see what you come up with.)
10. At first glance, the backward look of verses 11 and 12 is similar to that in verses 5 and 6. But there is a critical difference in just what it is that the Psalmist recalls. What is that difference? What lesson does this hold for us when the Psalmist's condition comes upon us? Compare Gal 2:20; Phil 3:7-11.
11. How do verses 13-15 emphasize this difference?
12. What is the relation between the fourth stanza (verses 16-20) and the third (verses 10-15)?
13. See if you can identify the allusions in verses 16-19. Do you see a chiasm here?
14. Compare the flow of this Psalm with another of Asaph's compositions, Ps 73. How many points of similarity can you find?
15. Given this similarity, how are the two psalms different?