



Sermon Notes from 21 April

The End of Misery (*Psalms 77*)

by Rev Guna Raman

The Bible is an honest book. It records gruesome events in history without sugar coating them. It does not evade the feelings of disappointment and sorrow that we experience in our world. The Psalms, a book of Hebrew poetry, explicitly shows us how to deal with the full range of human emotions. They lead us to a place of hope and genuine joy.

Psalms 77:

1) First Half: The Reality of Life (vv1-9)

vv1-9 - Represents a man's anguished perplexity over God not responding to unceasing and urgent prayer (v1).

v2 - In his distress, he seeks God to find no immediate relief.

v3 - The thought of God only seemed to make matters worse.

v4 - He was falling into depression, unable to sleep or talk to others.

v5 - Remembering the better times of your past makes your pain even more acute.

v6a - He also remembers personal moments of praise. All these led him to ask raw and honest questions.

vv6b-9 - The non-Christian would question the goodness of God; he would rather trust himself than God. The Christian who knows the Lord still wonders about God's truth and promises.

2) Second Half: The Red Sea (vv10-20)

This sets apart a Christian from a non-Christian - one who has faith in God, and one who does not.

v10 - Having the perspective that God is the Ancient of Days and the One who sees all (2 Pet. 3:8), it changes things for the Psalmist.

vv11-12 - In his misery, the Psalmist appeals to his history and forsakes his

self-centered thinking to keep his spirit from fainting.

vv13-14 - He remembers his very existence was because of a miracle and this lifts his spirit up. God who had supernaturally acted in the past can be trusted in the present and the future.

v15 - The Psalmist appeals to the miraculous display from his past that draws him out of himself and fills him with faith and hope.

vv16-20 - He appealed to the miraculous exodus from Egypt and the spectacular parting of the Red Sea that displayed who the one true God is. God acting in history is never to be forgotten (De. 4:34)!

Anchor yourself in the great and mighty act of salvation that God has already done in history!

3) Today's Situation: The Resurrection

Jesus Christ was crucified under Pontius Pilate (a known historical figure in the Roman empire) outside the city of Jerusalem which still exists today. He died, was buried, and resurrected 3 days later! Acts 26:24-26 - The entire miracle was a public event. There are historical records of witnesses who encountered the risen Saviour (1 Co. 15:5-6). Death cannot destroy you when you hold onto the hope that Jesus is alive. Remember and meditate on the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Acts 17:31 - Jesus's resurrection proves that He is the one true God and Lord - the judge of the world; a God who took on evil and defeated it. He died to take out sin and judgement on Himself to reconcile us to God forever. Believe that Jesus is alive! It is there that you will find hope in the midst of misery, grief and sorrow (1 Co. 15:17,20)!