

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XLIV: A Lesson In Maintaining Faith In God When We Do Not Understand His Actions

(Psalm 44:1-26)

I. Introduction

- A. Sometimes God allows certain events to occur, especially negative ones, when we do not understand His actions, and this often leads to the temptation to doubt God's goodness and intentions.
- B. We may know that this is a mistake, but we still need direction in such times, and Psalm 44:1-26 offers it:

II. A Lesson In Maintaining Faith In God When We Do Not Understand His Actions, Psalm 44:1-26.

- A. Verse one in the Hebrew text comprises the introductory remarks in the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1012), so we stay with the verse numbering arrangement of the English Bible for clarity with this lesson.
- B. We translate Psalm 44:1-26 as follows (Ibid., Kittel, p. 1012-1013): (1) "O Elohim, with our ears we have heard; our fathers have recounted to us the deeds You have done in their days, in the days of antiquity." (2) "You (emph. pron.) with Your hand drove out the nations and planted our fathers; You crushed the peoples and made our fathers flourish." (3) "For it was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them salvation, for it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your face [that this these things] because You accepted them." (4) "You (emph. pron.) are He, my King and my Elohim; Who decrees deliverances for Jacob." (5) "Through You we push back our enemies; through Your Name we trample our foes." (6) "For I do not trust in my bow, an my sword does not bring me salvation;" (7) For You give us salvation from our enemies; and You put our enemies to shame." (8) In Elohim we make our boast all day long, and we praise Your Name forever. Selah." (9) "But now You have rejected and humbled us; and You no longer go out with our armies!" (10) "You made us retreat before the enemy, and our adversaries have plundered us:" (11) "You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations." (12) "For a pittance You sold your people, gaining nothing from their sale." (13) "You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us." (14) "You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples' shake their heads at us." (15) "All day long my disgrace is before me, and my face is covered with shame" (16) "from the taunts of those who reproach and revile me, from the face of the enemy, who is bent on revenge." (17) "All of this happened to us though we did not forget You nor had been false to Your covenant." (18) "Our hearts had not turned back; our feet had not strayed from Your path;" (19) "For You crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals and covered us over with deep darkness." (20) "If we had forgotten the Name of our Elohim or had spread out our hands to a foreign god;" (21) "would not Elohim have discovered this, for He (emph. pron.) knows the secrets of the heart!" (22) "For Your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." (23) "Awake! Why do You sleep, O Adonai? Rouse Yourself! Do not reject us forever!" (24) "Why do You hide Your face and forget our misery and oppression?" (25) "For our entire beings are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground." (26) "Rise up and help us; redeem us on account of Your loyal love!"
- C. We note significant observations and applications of this psalm toward edifying believers in need (as follows):
 1. The introductory notes mark this psalm as a "maschil," what scholars believe is likely "a contemplative or didactic psalm" intended to give instruction, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psalm 32.
 2. As such, this psalm instructs God's people in times of trouble when they do not understand God's failure to bless them still to do what the psalmist did -- to keep the faith in God and continue to call upon Him!
 3. Like the lesson of the Book of Job, the believer must never hold God accountable to explain Himself as though God were subject to the believer, but rather see God as sovereign and good in spite of the believer's failure to understand the Lord and His action or inaction! Isaiah 55:8-9 applies here, stating: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Lesson: *When God's people did not understand why He was not helping them gain victory over their foes, the psalmist exemplified the need for them still to trust Him to be good and rely on Him to help them.*

Application: *(1) May we not judge God by our understanding, for our understanding can be tainted or incomplete, but may we trust and obey Him based on what His objective, authoritative Word states. (2) Thus, even if His actions or inaction seem inexplicable, may we still hold God to be good and righteous and keep on heeding Him.*