

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Eighty-Three - Handling Unjust Persecuting Coalitions EVEN By RELATIVES (Psalm 83:1-18)

I. Introduction

- A. It is one thing to have an unjust opponent. It is quite another to have **several** unjust opponents. However, when the opponents **combine** in league with each other, and take secret, crafty **counsel** to **oppose** an innocent party, that is the height of painful, fearful intrigue that can leave one dreadfully paranoid!
- B. Psalm 83:1-18 is a psalm uttered by one in such a spot, and it directs the troubled saint in such a time.

II. Handling Unjust Persecuting Coalitions EVEN By RELATIVES, Psalm 83:1-18.

- A. The psalmist called for help to the Lord for deliverance from a crafty, dangerous coalition of nations that had set themselves up against Israel for her destruction, Ps. 83:1-4:
 - 1. Hoping that God would not be inactive in the current crisis, the psalmist asked for action from the Almighty, claiming that his opposing enemies in coalition with one another actually opposed God, 1-3.
 - 2. The reason the psalmist would declare that these nations opposed God was that their desire to annihilate Israel ran contrary to God's revealed Abrahamic Covenant, and he banks on that fact in his appeal for God's help, Ps. 83:4 in light of Genesis 12:1-4.
- B. Then the psalmist names those in conspiracy and league against his nation and thus against God, 83:5-8:
 - 1. He names the **relative** nations in the Edomites (descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother), the Ishmaelites (who descended from Isaac's half-brother, Ishmael) and the Moabites and Ammonites (who came through an incestuous union between Lot and his daughters, the grand nieces of Abraham), 83:5-7.
 - 2. He names the **Gentile** nations of the Hagrites, Byblos (Geba), Amalek, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria, 6-8.
- C. Having named his opposing enemies in coalition to destroy Israel, God's chosen people, the psalmist then asks God to deal out vengeance against them in keeping with His past judgment on such national enemies:
 - 1. He asks God to destroy them as He did to the Midianites under Gideon's deliverance, 83:9a; Ju. 7:22. As the Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his wife, Keturah, this event acts as a precedent that God will judge even **relative** nations who oppress God's chosen people!
 - 2. He asks God to destroy them as He did to Sisera and Jabin at the River Kishon, 83:9b; Ju. 4:21-23. These were Gentiles from the Canaanite peoples, and shows a precedent for God's judging **Gentiles** who oppress God's chosen peoples.
 - 3. The psalmist asks God to make the nobles who lead these nations with malice like the nobles God had destroyed of similar vein in Oreb, Zeeb, princes of the **relative** Midianites (Ju. 7:25), and Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of **relative** Midian who goaded Gideon to fight him if they could (Ju. 8:21) who sought to confiscate Israel's possessions for themselves though these possessions were also thereby those possessions that belonged to God, Ps. 83:11-12.
 - 4. The psalmist asked that these opponents be whipped about as by a whirlwind, as insecure, loose and cheap stubble before the wind of divine judgment, and consumed as before a fire, Ps. 83:13-14.
 - 5. In effect, he asked that these enemies come to fear God's judgment as they had sought to intimidate God's people in their efforts, and in shame come to revere and seek God, Ps. 83:15-17, 18.

Lesson: One handles oppressive, conspiring coalitions by (1) seeking God's help based upon God's interests involved in the one who is mistreated. The oppressed also (2) trusts God's PRECEDENTS of vengeance (3) even re: RELATIVES as encouragement that God will come his aid at THIS time!

Application: To deal well with ANY oppressive coalition, EVEN that involving RELATED parties, (1) one must first be related to God by faith in Christ so as to have all he is and has brought under the domain of the Lord. (2) Then, the believer must fellowship with God via (a) confession of sin (1 Jn. 1:9), (b) dependence on the Spirit for behavior control (Gal. 5:16-23) to (c) heed Scripture (1 Jn. 2:3-6) for God's blessing (Ps. 1:1-6). In this state, he can (3) appeal to God to help counter those who want to harm him, for (a) God's interests in the believer and his possessions are being countered by the coalition, and (b) God's past precedents of deliverances in such cases act to encourage faith in the troubled one that God WILL help him out!