

PSALM 83

THE ISLAMIC ENEMIES OF ISRAEL

AUTHOR: Asaph

INTRODUCTION: Psalm 83 is the last of 12 psalms written by Asaph (Psalms 50, 73-83). Asaph was a Levite (1Chr6:39) appointed by King David as chief song-leader (1Chr6:4-5; Neh12:46) to preside over corporate worship services after the Tabernacle was brought to Jerusalem, and later at the Temple (1Chr6:31-32).

Psalm 83 is a "prophetic" imprecatory psalm. It is imprecatory in that the psalm is a prayer for God to judge harshly a confederacy of nations that has come against Israel (vv9-17). The confederacy of nations is explicitly identified by Asaph (vv6-8), but the Bible contains no historical record of such a vast confederacy coming against Israel or Judah in the past. Thus, the subject of this psalm must be regarded as a yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecy of the future. This is consistent with the Bible's designation of Asaph as a "seer" (2Chr29:30), that is a prophet.

The confederacy described by this psalm is forming before our very eyes in these last days. Psalm 83 vividly describes today's Satanically-inspired alliance of Islamic nations calling for the utter destruction of Israel. These nations are described as the enemies of God, and those who hate God (v2), and they will be destroyed (v17).

ISRAEL'S ENEMIES IN THE LAST DAYS

- [1] As with all imprecatory psalms, Asaph calls for God to act. Note the tone of desperation in the words of the psalmist. The situation is dire, and Israel can only be delivered by the direct intervention of God.
- [2] Those that have come against the nation of Israel (v4) are not described as enemies of Israel (though of course they are), but as enemies of God! We as Christians in these last days must be very careful as to which nations in the Middle East are granted our support or even sympathy, so as not to find ourselves siding with those who "hate" God.
- [3] The conspiracy of this confederacy is against the "hidden ones" of God. This is a term used for the nation of Israel (Cp., Ex19:5 and Ps135:4 with Matt13:44) during the time of her setting aside (i.e., the Church Age; Rom11:25).
- [4] The objective of this last days confederacy is the utter annihilation of Israel: "Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation". Note that it is Israel as a nation, not individual Jews in the Diaspora, against which this confederacy of nations conspires. The Bible contains no record of a confederacy as described here coming against Israel prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the world-wide dispersion of the nation in A.D. 70, and from that time until 1948 the nation of Israel did not exist.

- [5] Though the nations in the confederacy are different in many ways, in their objective of the destruction of the nation of Israel they are in perfect unity.

Note that again the confederacy is said to be working against God. Why? Because the return of the Jews to the land that God promised to Abraham and his seed (Gen12:1, 7; 13:15; 15:18) and the restoration of the nation, first in unbelief (Ezek20:33-38), but ultimately in belief (Deut30:3-5; Ezek37:21-22; Rom11:26), is a work of God that He has unconditionally committed to do. To oppose this work is to oppose God!

- [6] The nations listed here as the enemies of God are today all Muslim nations; they are not "Arabic", as often wrongly designated in the secular media, but they are all Muslim. The reason that Muslim nations are often confused as "Arabs", however, is because the religion of Islam forces the culture of 7th century Arabia on those nations that embrace it.

The nations here described as confederated against God and His chosen nation Israel are: Edom (i.e., modern day **Jordan**), the Ismaelites (**Arabia**), Moab (**Jordan**), the Hagarenes (a nomadic people east of Gilead descended from Hagar/Ismael, 1Chr5:10)...

- [7] Gebal (**Lebanon**), Ammon (**Jordan**), Amalek (**Jordan**), the Philistines (the **Palestinians?**), Tyre (**Lebanon/Syria**)...

- [8] Assyria (**Iraq**), and Lot (**Jordan**). Note that these nations, other than Assyria (Iraq) which is said to have "helped the children of Lot", are primarily peoples descended from Abraham's close relatives, but were excluded from the Abrahamic covenant and its explicit land grant (Gen14:13-17; 17:19-21; 27:37-41); Lot (Moab, Ammon) was Abraham's nephew, Ishmael (Ishmaelites, Hagarenes) his son, and Esau (Edom) his grandson. Thus, the real motivation behind this confederacy is the ancient hatred of Ishmael for Isaac, and Esau for Jacob, regarding the Promised Land.

Heading the list of this confederacy of nations aligned against Israel is Edom (v6), which is prophesied to be utterly destroyed in the last days (Ezek25:12-14; 35:1-15; Obad1-21), and whose attitude there is described in terms very similar to Psalm 83. Note that the confederacy of Psalm 83 is distinctly different than that led by Russia and which will include Iran, Turkey, North Africa and Eastern Europe (i.e., Russia aligned with a different set of Muslim nations) described separately in Ezekiel 38-39; there is no overlap of nations at all between these two end-times confederacies.

PETITION FOR GOD TO JUDGE ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

- [9] Here Asaph begins his imprecatory petition, calling for God's deliverance of Israel and judgment of these confederated nations. Two prior miraculous interventions by God on behalf of Israel are called into remembrance: God's deliverance from the Midianites by the hand of Gideon (Judg6-8), and from the Canaanites by the hand of Deborah/Barak (Judg4-5). Jabin was the king of Canaan, Sisera was the captain of his army (Judg4:2), and Israel's defeat of them

was enabled by heavy rains (Judg5:4) causing over-flooding of the river Kishon (Judg5:52) which bogged down the Canaanite chariots (Judg4:14).

- [10] The victory over Jabin and the Canaanites occurred in the valley of Meggido (Judg5:19), just to the south of the river Kishon, whose origin is melting snow from Mt. Tabor; Endor is the prominent city at the base of Mt. Tabor, and here is a figurative reference to the headwaters of the Kishon.
- [11] Oreb and Zeeb were princes of Midian, and Zebah and Zalmunna were kings of Midian, all of whom Gideon slew (Judg7:25; 8:21).
- [12] The prior sin of Midian and Canaan, that of desiring and attempting to possess the land God gave to Israel, is repeated in the end-time confederacy of nations listed in this psalm. It is not just that they want to destroy the nation of Israel, they covet the land of Israel for themselves.
- [13] In vv13-15 the psalmist uses several figures in calling for the destruction of these enemies of God. The KJV "wheel" actually refers to a 'tumbleweed', which along with "stubble" (or chaff) is gathered to be burned. Fire is a common metaphor used for God's judgment (Matt3:12).
- [16] All (believers and unbelievers alike) will one day be brought to the confession that Jehovah, "the God of Israel", is the only true God (Isa45:3, 21-23); compare Isa45:23 with its quotation in Philip2:10-11.
- [17] The destiny of unrepentant enemies of God is to perish. The ending stanza of the Song of Deborah reads, "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD" (Judg5:31; Cp., Nah1:2).
- [18] These confederated, Muslim nations all worship a 'god' they call *Allah*; but as a result of God's acting in judgment against them, they will be confronted with the inescapable truth that it is Jehovah alone Who is the Most High God.