

## PSALM 83

*God Implored to Confound His Enemies.*

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (9-27-95).
- B. A Song. A Psalm of Asaph. "A Plea For God to Confound His Enemies."
- C. This is the last of the Asaph Psalms.
- D. A long list of enemies of Israel are listed here:
  - (1) the Edomites, (2) the Ishmaelites,
  - (3) the Moabites, (4) the Hagarenes,
  - (5) Gebal, (6) Ammon,
  - (7) Amalek, (8) Philistines,
  - (9) Tyre, and (10) Assyria.Since these were not all in existence at one time, it seems that these represent a kind of composite of the common enemies that Israel contended with over a period of time. The psalm focuses on Israel's need to depend on God for protection because they could not protect themselves on their own. We still need to learn this same lesson today.
- E. Coffman uses the paragraphing of Albert Barnes, and we shall too.
  - I. Prayer for God Not to be Silent (83:1).
  - II. Summary of the Danger Threatening Israel (83:2-5).
  - III. Enumeration of the Enemies (83:6-8).
  - IV. Prayer for God to Intervene as in Ancient Instances of His Help (83:9-12).
  - V. Prayer for Overthrow of All Israel's Enemies (83:13-18).

### THE TEXT.

- 83:1** O God, do not remain quiet;  
Do not be silent and, O God, do not be still.
- 2** For behold, Your enemies make an uproar,  
And those who hate You have exalted themselves.
- 3** They make shrewd plans against Your people,  
And conspire together against Your treasured ones.
- 4** They have said, "Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation,  
That the name of Israel be remembered no more."
- 5** For they have conspired together with one mind;  
Against You they make a covenant:
- 6** The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,  
Moab and the Hagrites;
- 7** Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,  
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
- 8** Assyria also has joined with them;  
They have become a help to the children of Lot. Selah.
- 9** Deal with them as with Midian,  
As with Sisera and Jabin at the torrent of Kishon,
- 10** Who were destroyed at En-dor,  
Who became as dung for the ground.
- 11** Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb  
And all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
- 12** Who said, "Let us possess for ourselves  
The pastures of God."
- 13** O my God, make them like the whirling dust,  
Like chaff before the wind.
- 14** Like fire that burns the forest  
And like a flame that sets the mountains on fire,
- 15** So pursue them with Your tempest  
And terrify them with Your storm.

- 16 Fill their faces with dishonor,  
That they may seek Your name, O LORD.
- 17 Let them be ashamed and dismayed forever,  
And let them be humiliated and perish,
- 18 That they may know that You alone, whose name is the LORD,  
Are the Most High over all the earth.

## COMMENTS.

- A. Prayer for God Not to be Silent (83:1).  
[v1] "Do not keep silent...hold Your peace...be still, O God!" The repetition of the appeals expresses a sense of urgency--"Lord, do it now!"
- B. Summary of the Danger Threatening Israel (83:2-5).  
[v2] "...Your enemies make a tumult...lifted up their head." The world follows the "prince of this world" in its hatred and opposition to the Lord.  
[v3] "They have taken crafty counsel...consulted together against your sheltered ones." Balaam's attempts to serve the Moabites, and his advice on how to get Israel cursed through feasting and fornication is an example of "crafty counsel."  
[v4,5] "...Come, let us cut them off from being a nation..." The picture is of many enemies conspiring together to completely destroy Israel. Of course Satan is the one directing this opposition.
- C. Enumeration of the Enemies (83:6-8).  
Of these ten peoples listed, all are known except the Hagarenes and Gebal. We assume that the Hagarenes were probably Arabs, the descendants of Hagar. Gebal was "an ancient Phoenician city located on a bluff overlooking the Mediterranean Sea." (*ISBE*). (Hagar's son was Ishmael and descendants, the Ishmaelites).  
The "children of Lot" were Moab and Ammon, and their descendants were the Moabites and the Ammonites mentioned in 83:6-7.
- D. Prayer for God to Intervene as in Ancient Instances of His Help (83:9-12).  
[v9,11] "Deal with them as with Midian....like Oreb and Zeeb...like Zebah and Zalmunna..." Gideon and three hundred men routed the Midianites in Jud. 7. Oreb and Zeeb were leaders who were beheaded; Zeba and Zalmunna were petty kings of Midian who were slain by Gideon (Jud. 8:4-12).
- E. Prayer for Overthrow of All Israel's Enemies (83:13-18).  
[v13,14] "...like the whirling dust... chaff before the wind... as fire burns the woods..." The figures of dust and chaff before the wind and a forest fire describes the psalmist's prayer for the Lord's enemies.  
[v15-17] "...pursue them... frighten them... fill their faces with shame..." The psalmist wants God to fill them with terror as well as to destroy their power--"that they may seek Your name..." (83:16). Yet he goes on to say "...let them be put to shame and perish." When an enemy is spoken of it may be a nation composed of individuals where the leaders are evil and cruel, and many of the people are the same, yet there may be some individuals who are good and honest who want to do right.  
[v18] "That they may know that You...are the Most High over all the earth."