

## Psalms 83

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 83 - and as we make our way to the 83rd Psalm...

...I should take a moment to point out that - this is the 11th - of 11 consecutive songs - written by a seer named Asaph.

And it's here in our text tonight - where we find Asaph - presenting a prophecy...

...about the days when the nations that surround Israel will conspire to conquer the land of promise.

Now - before we begin our overview of this chapter - I should take a moment to point out that...

...there are many different ideas - about the proper way to interpret this chapter.

This includes the interpretation of those who insist that - Asaph was NOT presenting an end times prophecy...

...but - instead - he was referring to the days - when King David's army was in a major war...

...with a large alliance of enemies that included the Ammonites - the Syrians - and others.

The main problem with this interpretation is based on the fact that...

...the confederation of nations that we find here in the 83rd Psalm...

...doesn't match with any of the battles that King David fought.

It's for this reason that many Bible teachers see this as prophecy that Asaph wasn't presenting - about the future.

With that being the case - you might be interested to know that...

...some Bible teachers believe that the battle found here in our text tonight was actually fulfilled back in 1948...

...during Israel's War for Independence.

Others insist that this prophecy was fulfilled during the 6 Day War of 1967...

...when Israel took control of Jerusalem.

There are also those who believe that the fulfillment of this prophecy began on October 7th - 2023...

...when Hamas invaded southern Israel - thereby sparking the Gaza war.

And as we consider these different interpretations of the 83rd Psalm...

...it's my hope that our study tonight will help us to grasp how God's plan for Israel...

...will ultimately help the world to see that Yahweh is the Most High God over all the earth.

With this as our focus - let's turn our attention to the lyrics that we find here in the 83rd Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 1 - where Asaph writes...

Psa 83:1      A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.  
Do not keep silent, O God!

Do not hold Your peace,  
And do not be still, O God!

Psa 83:2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult;  
And those who hate You have lifted up their head.

Psa 83:3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people,  
And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.

Psa 83:4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a  
nation,  
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."

Here in the beginning of this Psalm - we find Asaph - crying out to the  
Lord for help.

The reason why is due to the fact that - the enemies of Israel were  
conspiring against the nation of Israel.

And as we consider this cry for help - it seems as if this was a  
situation that Asaph was experiencing - personally.

This is one reason for why some Bible teachers will insist that this Psalm  
is NOT a prophecy.

Most end times prophecies will identify the events in the passage as  
something that will take place in the - latter days.

And there is no mention of the latter days - here in the 83rd  
Psalm.

This detail has led many to believe that the battle Asaph  
described here in our text tonight - is NOT a prophecy...

...I should remind you that - Asaph wasn't just a  
prolific Psalmist - - he was a seer.

As a matter of fact - it was Ezra the priest - who referred to Asaph as a  
Seer.

And just to be clear - the Hebrew word which was translated - Seer -  
was used of those to whom the Lord gave prophetic vision...

...which would then be presented to His people.

What this means is that - Asaph was a Seer - who was empowered to present the prophetic word of God.

And as we continue to consider the lyrics of this Psalm...

...it will become evident that Asaph was in fact presenting a prophecy.

With this as our focus - let's take some time to consider the confederation of those who will take crafty counsel against the people of Israel.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 5 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:5 For they have consulted together with one consent;  
They form a confederacy against You:

Psa 83:6 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites;  
Moab and the Hagrites;

Psa 83:7 Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek;  
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Psa 83:8 Assyria also has joined with them;  
They have helped the children of Lot. Selah

Here in these verses - we find Asaph - presenting us with a confederation of 10 nations...

...that consult together with one consent - as they conspire against the Lord.

Notice again - there in verse 5 - where Asaph tells us that...

Psa 83:5 For they have consulted together with one consent;  
They form a confederacy against You:

That's right - this confederation of 10 nations - are actually consulting together against the Lord.

It's for this reason that Asaph began this Psalm - by declaring...

Psa 83:1 Do not keep silent, O God!

Do not hold Your peace,

And do not be still, O God!

Psa 83:2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult;

And those who hate You have lifted up their head.

From this - we can see that - this confederation of nations will lift up their heads against the Lord...

...and the reason why is because - they hate the true and living God.

That being the case - we shouldn't be surprised to learn that...

...these nations will conspire together against Israel...

...so that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.

With this as their goal - let's consider the 10 nations that Asaph mentioned here in our text tonight.

It's there in verse 6 - where Asaph first mentioned the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites.

Just to be clear - Edom is a reference to Southwest Jordan...

...while the Ishmaelites are often associated with the broader group of Arabians...

...as they inhabited the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding areas.

We should also notice - there in the second half of verse 6 - where Asaph mentioned Moab - and the Hagrites

The people of Moab dwelt in the region that is currently known as Central West Jordan...

...while the Hagrites were a nomadic group - who were associated with Mount Sinai in Arabia.

It's in verse 7 - where Asaph mentioned Gebal, Ammon, Amalek; Philistia - with the inhabitants of Tyre;

Gebal is Northern Lebanon - Ammon is Northern Jordan - and Amalek refers to the Northern Sinai.

Philistia is a reference to the Gaza Strip - - while Tyre is Southwest Lebanon.

Then - in verse 8 - Asaph mentioned Assyria - and the children of Lot.

Assyria refers to the region of Syria and Northern Iraq...

...while the Children of Lot is a reference to Moab and Ammon.

Now - as we consider the geographic locations of this 10 nations confederation...

...it'll help you to realize that - these are the nations that share a border with Israel.

And while it's true that Israel has experienced conflict with these nations from time to time...

...we have yet to witness the fulfillment of this prophecy - and one reason why is because...

...we've never seen this specific confederation of nations - working together...

...to wipe Israel from the map.

The closest confederation that we've witnessed to date - began back on October 7th - 2023...

...when Hamas launched their attack on Israel - from the Gaza Strip.

This war with Gaza quickly turned into a seven front attack against Israel...

...as Iran and its proxies attacked Israel from Gaza, Lebanon, the West Bank, Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Iran.

And while this confederation of nations is a close match to the Psalm 83 battle...

...it's my opinion that we haven't yet witnessed the fulfillment of this prophecy.

And in order to make my case - let's continue to consider the lyrics of this song.

It's here in our text tonight - where we find Asaph - asking the Lord to defend the nation of Israel.

Let's consider how he put it - here in Psalm 83 - look with me - beginning there at verse 9 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:9 Deal with them as with Midian,  
As with Sisera,  
As with Jabin at the Brook Kishon,  
Psa 83:10 Who perished at En Dor,  
Who became as refuse on the earth.  
Psa 83:11 Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb,  
Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,  
Psa 83:12 Who said, "Let us take for ourselves  
The pastures of God for a possession."

Here in these verses - we find Asaph - recalling the ways that the Lord protected the children of Israel - during the days of the judges.

He began by referring to the ways that the Lord used Gideon's small group of soldiers - to defeat the Midianites.

And then he mentioned the victory that took place at the Kishon River...

...where Barak and Deborah defeated Sisera - the Canaanite commander of King Jabin's army...

...who became like rubbish that covered the land.

It's there in verse 11 - where Asaph also mentioned Oreb and Zeeb...

...the Midianite commanders - who were captured and killed by the Ephraimites...

...after Gideon's army defeated the Midianites - in the Jezreel valley.

And it's here in this prayer - where Asaph asked the Lord to make the nobles of this 10 nation confederation...

...like Oreb and like Zeeb - who were both captured and killed.

And it's there in the second half of verse 11 - where he also mentioned - Zebah and Zalmunna.

Just to be clear - Zebah and Zalmunna were the kings of Midian - who commanded the invasion of Israel...

...as they set out to take the pastures of God for their own possession.

But rather than accomplishing their evil agenda - which was to conquer the land of Israel...

...they were captured and killed by Gideon himself.

In light of these examples - we can see how Asaph was looking to the Lord...

...to rise up and protect them from the 10 nation confederation - who were determined to commit genocide against Israel...

...so that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.

And it's for this reason that Asaph asked the Lord to defend them...

...by wiping their enemies from the face of the Earth.

Let's consider how he presented this prayer request - here in the 83rd Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 13 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:13 O my God, make them like the whirling dust,  
Like the chaff before the wind!

Psa 83:14 As the fire burns the woods,  
And as the flame sets the mountains on fire,

Psa 83:15 So pursue them with Your tempest,  
And frighten them with Your storm.

Psa 83:16 Fill their faces with shame,  
That they may seek Your name, O LORD.

Psa 83:17 Let them be confounded and dismayed forever;  
Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,

Psa 83:18 That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD,  
Are the Most High over all the earth.

Here in the second half of this Psalm - we find further proof that Asaph was presenting a prophecy.

Proof of my point can be found in the fact that the outcome of this battle...

...would result in a permanent punishment - which would cause this 10 nation confederation...

...to be confounded and dismayed forevermore.

Let's break it down - verse by verse - - beginning there at verse 13 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:13 O my God, make them like the whirling dust,  
Like the chaff before the wind!

Here in this verse - we find Asaph - asking the Lord to turn the enemies of Israel into whirling dust...

...which might be better rendered - a rolling tumble weed.

He also asked the Lord to make them like the worthless chaff that is easily blown away by the wind.

And as we consider these similitudes - we can see how Asaph was asking the Lord...

...to drive that 10 nation confederation away from Israel.

Not only that - - but - it's there in verse 14 and 15 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:14 As the fire burns the woods,  
And as the flame sets the mountains on fire,  
Psa 83:15 So pursue them with Your tempest,  
And frighten them with Your storm.

Here in these verses - we find Asaph - asking the Lord to pursue the enemies of Israel - like a forest fire that burns the woods.

He also asked the Lord to fill their hearts with fear - with a storm that becoming that sets the mountains on fire.

And as we consider how our God is a consuming fire...

...I have no doubt that Asaph was looking for a literal fulfillment of this prayer.

We should also consider the third part of this prayer request - which is found there in verse 16 - where Asaph declared...

Psa 83:16 Fill their faces with shame,  
That they may seek Your name, O LORD.

Here in this verse - we find Asaph - asking the Lord to bring the enemies of Israel to a point of disgrace...

...so that their shame could be seen in the countenance of their face.

And at the same time - he also prayed that their shame might bring them to a point of repentance...

...so that they might seek the name of Yahweh.

This reminds me of something that Paul wrote in 2nd Corinthians chapter 7 - it's verse 10 where he declared...

2Co 7:10a ...godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted...

There are times when the unrepentant need to be brought to a point of godly sorrow...

...so that they might repent of their sins - and trust in the Lord - Who alone can save us.

And it's here in the 83rd Psalm - where Asaph prayed for the enemies of Israel...

...so that the shame of the sorrow - might result in their salvation.

At the same time - he also prayed for the destruction of those who will not repent.

Let's consider how he put it - beginning there at verse 17 - where Asaph prayed...

Psa 83:17 Let them be confounded and dismayed forever;  
Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,  
Psa 83:18 That they may know that You, whose name alone is the  
LORD, Are the Most High over all the earth.

Here in the final verses of this chapter - we find Asaph - asking the  
Lord to punish those who will not repent.

I like the way the scholars who created the New Living Translation  
rendered verse 17 - they put it like this...

Psa 83:17 Let them be ashamed and terrified forever.  
Let them die in disgrace.

In other words - Asaph was asking the Lord to punish that  
10 nation confederation...

...until they die in the disgrace of their attempted  
genocide of Israel.

We should also notice that this decisive defeat - will help the people  
of those nations to realize that...

...the Lord God of Israel - is the Most High over all the earth.

And as we consider all of the details found here in the  
lyrics of the song...

...it seems to me that Asaph was prophetically  
pointing to a battle...

...that has yet to take place.

In order to make my case - I'll remind you that - we have yet to witness a  
confederation of the 10 nations mentioned here in this chapter.

Secondly - we haven't yet witnessed a decisive victory - over this  
specific confederation.

And thirdly - we have yet to see the people of these nations - coming to the realization...

...that the defeat of their armies is evidence - that Yahweh is the Most High God over all the earth.

And with all of this being the case - it seems to me that this battle is still on the prophetic horizon.

I also believe that - this battle - described here in the 83 Psalm - between Israel - and this 10 nation confederation...

...it seems to me that this battle will take place - prior to the end times war that we find in Ezekiel 38.

And in order to make my case - - let's consider one more detail found here in this chapter.

Let's back up and consider a detail that Asaph mentioned - back in verses 3 and 4 - where he declared...

Psa 83:3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people,  
And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.

Psa 83:4 They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation,  
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."

Here in these verses - we find Asaph - referring to the nation of Israel - as the sheltered ones.

That word - sheltered - found there at the end of verse 3 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used of a treasure that is hidden - concealed - and protected.

And we can be certain that the Lord was the One Who provides shelter for His people...

...like a Hen who protects her chicks from the predator.

This is the same word that the Lord used in Ezekiel chapter 7 - where He referred to His secret place in Jerusalem.

And so - it seems to me that - Asaph's reference to the sheltered ones of the Lord...

...was his way of describing those who were hidden by God behind the protective walls of Jerusalem.

And what this means is that - this attack on Israel will take place at a time...

...when the nation of Israel will dwell in the secret place of Jerusalem - behind sheltered walls.

In contrast to this - the Ezekiel 38 war will kick off at a time when the nation of Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages.

With this as our focus - let's turn in our Bibles to Ezekiel chapter 38 - and as we make our way to the 38th chapter of Ezekiel...

...I should take a moment to remind you that - this war will take place - in the latter years...

...after the dead - dry bones of Israel are restored to life.

Then - after the people of Israel are restored to their land...

...that's when another confederation of nations - decide to invade the land of promise.

With this context in mind - let's turn our attention to Ezekiel chapter 38 - look with me beginning there at verse 8 - where the Lord declared...

Eze 38:8 "After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had

long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.

Eze 38:9 “You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you.”

Eze 38:10 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan:

Eze 38:11 “You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates’—

Eze 38:12 “to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land.

Here in these verses - we find the Lord - describing the days - after the restoration of Israel...

...when a confederation of nations - will invade the land of Israel - like a storm that covers the land.

And we must not fail to notice that this will take place at a time...

...with the people of Israel will be peaceful people, who dwell safely...

...all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates’.

Now - listen - the restoration of Israel officially took place - on May 14, 1948...

...when David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel in Tel Aviv.

Then - on May 15th - 1948 - the armies of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq...

...sought to secure Arab sovereignty over the land of Israel - by attacking the newly formed Israeli Defense Force.

And listen - it didn't take long for the enemies of Israel to realize that - Jews were receiving help from on High.

By July 1949 - all five nations signed peace agreements with Israel.

In 1956 - Israel found themselves facing the second Arab–Israeli war - otherwise known as the Suez Crisis.

And in 1967 - Israel was embroiled in the Six-Day War.

In 1973 - Israel was attacked again - on the day of Yom Kippur.

And in 1982 - they found themselves at war with Lebanon War

...followed by the Second Lebanon War of 2006.

And then - in 2023 - Hamas attacked Israel - which turned into a 7 front war...

...which is still going on today.

All of that to say that - the nation of Israel hasn't experienced a time of peace - since it's rebirth in 1948.

And as we continue to watch things developing there in the Middle East...

...it seems to me that - the 7 front war - could easily give way to the Psalm 83 confederation.

And if so - then - this will be the battle that creates the conditions of peace...

...that the Lord described in Ezekiel chapter 38.

In other words - the Psalm 83 war - will result in the destruction of the armies - that represent the nations that border Israel.

And in this way - the end of the Psalm 83 war will result in a time of peace...

...as Israel finally lives in the land of promise - dwelling without walls - and having neither bars nor gates.

And then - after a season of peace in the land of promise...

...the military confederation that the Lord described in Ezekiel chapter 38...

...will invade the people who are peacefully dwelling in the land of Israel.

Now - as we consider this take on end times events - it's important for us to remember that - hind sight is 20-20.

And so - it's always good to consider these things with a measure of humility.

At the same time - it's also important for us to realize that - God has revealed the future in advance...

...so that - when it happens - we will recognize that Yahweh is the One - Who knows the end - from the beginning.

And as we consider how the Psalm 83 battle - will help the surrounding nations to see that - Yahweh alone is the Most High God over all the earth...

...I also encourage you to remember that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

And it's for this reason that we should become those believers who are proclaiming the prophetic word of God...

...so that we can help others to see that - the prophetic word of God is ultimately pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ...

...because - Jesus - and Jesus alone is able to save those who repent - and trust in Him.

And it's for this reason that we should Worship God!  
For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”